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Dynamics of International Nonprofit Capacity Building Partnerships

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ABSTRACT

This study worked to expand the discourse of international nonprofit capacity building research. In the field of Communication, research investigating international nonprofit partnerships is limited, and some international communities lack a voice within the scholarship. Through the lens of postcolonial reflexivity, the author traveled to Kenya to conduct participant observations and one-on-one interviews with a US Capacity Building Nonprofit (USCBN) and two local Kenyan nonprofit organizations (the KCN and the KSN). The findings revealed that the USCBN established previous organizational alliances with the KCN and the KSN. The previous alliances led to strong relationships. The relationships engendered collaboration within the partnerships, which resulted in sustainability for all three organizations.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

It was a cloudy afternoon, but my spirits were high as it was my first day traveling to volunteer in the township of Khayelitsha, South Africa with a US nonprofit organization. As I left my study abroad house on the University of Cape Town campus, I geared up for a forty-five minute drive to the orphanage in the township. When I applied to volunteer for the US organization, they had described themselves as a capacity building nonprofit endeavoring to support and sustain various local orphanages throughout Khayelitsha. The US nonprofit provided assistance to the orphanages through material resources and volunteer support. Throughout the summer of 2010, my study abroad cohort and I travelled five days a week to volunteer in a local orphanage operated by women from Khayelitsha.

That very first day, I was elated to meet the children. It seemed as if the US nonprofit provided exemplary assistance to its partner orphanages. The orphanage I visited was poorly understaffed, there were approximately thirty children to every adult. As we arrived, the “house mothers” eagerly greeted us. Then, they quickly disappeared once we were settled with our groups. At our volunteer orientation, we were told we would be supporting the house “moms” in caring for the children. We created educational lesson plans appropriate for the age groups for which we were responsible. Yet, in spite of having English as a national language, a majority of the younger children did not speak English, which made communication exceedingly difficult without the support of the house mothers.

As my fellow volunteers and I struggled to enact lesson plans with our groups throughout the summer, I began to realize the many issues plaguing the sustainability and success of the orphanage. The initial elation I experienced on that first day quickly dissipated to a feeling of helplessness. Apart from being understaffed, the children were undernourished and

undereducated. Instead of tackling these ever present inadequacies, the US nonprofit used grant funding to build brand new cement homes on the orphanage compound. Khayelitha is primarily composed of tin shacks and small cement homes with dirt floors; the US nonprofit built grandiose two story units that resembled US construction. After construction initiated, the orphanage experienced multiple robberies. One afternoon, a child I was responsible for fell down a flight of stairs at the newly built home. Since the orphanage was home to children with HIV/AIDS and their status was not disclosed to volunteers, I was unable to care for the crying child to avoid infection. It was devastating.

Further, it was devastating to watch the children go hungry each day and devour the treats we brought to them. Why was the US organization building new homes when the children were hungry? I was frustrated and pressed our volunteer coordinator for answers. In short, our volunteer coordinator explained that the US organization thought the children needed homes versus shacks. I also casually asked a house mother about the assistance the orphanage received; she told me they would take what they could get. I asked her whose idea it was to build the new homes; she told me she did not know because she never spoke with the US organization. I left South Africa feeling disheartened. I thought I was going to make an impact in the life of South African children; instead, I babysat.

Introduction

Upon returning to the States after volunteering in South Africa, I was plagued by various questions that emerged from memories of my experiences. As I returned to school that fall quarter, I decided to focus on international nonprofit organizing to better understand the frustrations I experienced while volunteering. Much to my surprise, there is limited research

investigating international nonprofit organizing in the field of Communication. As I began my inquiry, I discovered that the exigent forces of globalization have dramatically changed organizational structures and international organizing over the last few decades (Stohl, 2005). “Globalization is seen as a central driving force behind the rapid political, social, economic, and communicative changes taking place in contemporary society” (Stohl, 2005, p. 243). Communication researchers have composed and presented succinct theories as applied to communication within organizational settings. Nevertheless, these theories reflect domestic organizing versus international organizational praxis. Throughout the discipline of Communication, there are a scarce number of researchers investigating the phenomenon of globalization as it affects organizational activity and communication.

Before the 1980s, the field of Communication addressed cultural integration through the lens of Intercultural Communication (Stohl, 2005). In the 1990s, Communication researchers began to interpret globalization and its effects on communication and organizational activity. However, the theories presented by Communication scholars failed to address the intricate complexities that are emerging due to the inequities in our globalized system (Stohl, 2005). At the end of the twentieth-century, researchers started to explore and comprehend the multifaceted effects of globalization. To develop a thorough understanding of this phenomenon, Communication researchers were required to go outside of the field of Communication to review and analyze various interdisciplinary scholarship addressing globalization theory and practice; “globalization is far too complex and far-ranging to be situated easily within one perspective” (Stohl, 2005, p. 247). Even though the research and theory is quite disparate, it is evident that globalization inequitably impacts our political systems, economies, cultures, environments, information technologies, and spatio-temporal dimensions (Stohl, 2005).

In spite of the insurgence of globalized systems and organizational constructs, the field of Communication has continued to focus much of its inquiry on domestic, critical managerial studies (Simpson & Zorn, 2004; Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007). While some scholars have attempted to highlight the international research of Communication scholars and frame Communication as an internationally inclusive field (Mumby & Stohl, 2007), the field of Communication, in particular Organizational Communication, is mostly a homogenous field that limits the participation and inclusion of “Others” (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007). Organizational Communication has historically situated itself as a “dominant Euro-American” force which colonizes, subordinates, and oppresses “[native, indigenous, and other forms] of understanding and organizing” (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007, p. 249). Organizational Communication is a “U.S. centric” field, which limits the access of international voices and input as it applied to the scope of Organizational Communication publication (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007). There is a need for Communication researchers to expand upon international inquiry within the field.

Through writing my Master’s thesis, I wanted to address the limitations within the field of Communication and empirically expand international scholarship within the field. With that said, I realized the need for Communication researchers to readdress the methods through which they were analyzing cultures outside of their own. “[Communication researchers] interested in decolonizing organizational communication, must be ready to listen to and really hear Others and [the researchers] must be willing to see, understand, and address structural issues” present within our globalized systems (Grimes & Parker, 2009, p.510). My experience volunteering in South Africa allowed me to see the structural issues present within our globalized system; however, I wanted to conduct research that would permit me to really listen and hear the voices of Others and understand and address the structural issues that have engendered the differences in our

organizational experiences and imbalanced presence in Communication scholarship. Therefore, I designed this research to focus on international organizing, specifically international nonprofit organizations, to include the diverse voices underrepresented within our “dominant Euro-American” field of Communication (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007). I needed to understand the breakdown that caused children to go unfed during my South African experience. I wanted to know what caused that breakdown and what could be done to better facilitate the efficiency of international nonprofit partnerships. Further, I wanted to explore ways in which Others were equitably included in organizing processes to build a stable and efficient international organizing system. To explore these issues, I volunteered with a US nonprofit capacity building organization. The organization gave me clearance to conduct research during a trip to Kenya. While in Kenya I visited two local nonprofits with the US organization, and we conducted workshops at both sites. The ensuing chapters of this paper outline the experience I had while researching in Kenya and the subsequent findings of that research.

At the onset of my thesis research, I began by questioning, “What are the dynamics of international nonprofit capacity building partnerships?” To explore this question, I reviewed previous literature from various fields. Chapter Two, *Literature Review: Nonprofit Research, International Organizing, and Postcolonial Considerations*, covers the initial findings of my research. The chapter begins with a summary of nonprofit organizing. Since the scholarship examining international nonprofit organizing is incomplete, I was required to extrapolate research from domestic nonprofit studies. After revealing the necessity for nonprofit organizing within our globalized system (Stohl & Stohl, 2005), I overviewed international organization research. Four studies conducted by Luring (2011), Dempsey (2007), Murphy (2012), and Norander and Harter (2011) were thoroughly examined to provide an extensive scope of

international organizing practices. While it was found that there are many inequities present within international organizing (Lauring, 2011; Dempsey, 2007), there were organizations equitably partnering with organizations from underdeveloped communities (Murphy, 2012; Norander & Harter, 2011). The chapter concludes with a summary of postcolonial studies, specifically issues surrounding scholarly inheritance, power, and voice. The literature revealed that Communication researchers often evoke research using scholarship entrenched in colonial discourse; this practice marginalizes Others' voices and perpetuates inequitable power differences between the organizations (Narayan, 1997; Shome, 1996; Prasad, 2003). I took caution of this tendency and structured my research methodology to avoid further marginalization.

Chapter Three, *Methodology*, describes the methods used to conduct my thesis research. The chapter begins with an overview of the three organizations and the two research sites. Upon establishing the context of my research sites, I summarize my method of inquiry. Methodology for data collection included one-on-one in-person interviews and participant observations (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). Through the lens of postcolonial reflexivity, I conducted my one-on-one in-person interviews and participant observations. Postcolonial reflexivity allowed me to be aware of my privileged identity as a Western researcher and to reflect on the historical circumstances that positioned me as researcher versus participant (Narayan, 1997; Norander & Harter, 2011). Further, I experienced a great deal of emotion while in the field. I highlight these emotions and contextualized my emotional experience as a participant-researcher. The chapter ends with an outline of my procedures for data analysis; using grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), I analyzed and interpreted the findings of my research data.

Based on the literature review, I approached my data with the understanding that: *previous alliances form relationships that lead to collaboration and sustainability in international nonprofit organizing*. In Chapter Four, *Analysis of Emergent Themes*, four themes readily emerged from the research data: Building Alliances, The Power of Relationships, The Importance of Collaboration, and Creating Local Sustainability. Building Alliances revealed that capacity building organizations interested in partnering with local nonprofits from underdeveloped countries should first build alliances with the non-Western organizations. The Power of Relationships demonstrated that the connections made through the initial organizational alliances produced relational power dynamics and relative equality amongst organizational members. The balance of power within the relationships promoted shared decision making, which resulted in effective collaborations and sustainable programs. The third theme, The Importance of Collaboration, highlights the equitable ways in which the US nonprofit partnered with the two local Kenyan organizations. Decision-making and organizational initiatives were shared amongst the organizations and each organization benefited from the partnership. Through their collaborative efforts, the final theme, Creating Local Sustainability evolved. Through the partnerships, all three organizations emerged as viable, sustainable entities.

Even though a majority of the data positively reflected the partnerships, there were various tensions that interfered with the effectiveness of the organizing; tensions mounting from cultural and social identity conflicts, sanctioned voice and participation, and translation and communication limited organizational efficiency. Nevertheless, these tensions offered support for my thesis claims, as many of the tensions were a result of the participants' lack of involvement in the original alliances that united the organizations.

Chapter Five, *Conclusion: Next Generation Postcolonial Research and Organizing*, begins with a summarization of Chapter Four. Then, I offer various theoretical and practical implications as they emerged from the data. The data theoretically supported and contested claims made in prior scholarship examining international and nonprofit organizing. The chapter concludes with limitations and directions for future research. As a graduate student with limited resources, the scope of this study was inherently limited. I offer important directions for future scholars and practitioners interested in exploring international nonprofit capacity building from a postcolonial perspective.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Nonprofit Research, International Organizing, and Postcolonial Considerations

As argued in the Introduction, research examining international nonprofit organizing is sparse. There is some scholarship examining for-profit international organizing. However, this work is also minimal in number and nonprofit partnerships greatly differ from for-profit collaborations. For example, unlike for-profit organizations, nonprofit partnerships “share both core values and a common goal beyond their own survival” (Shumate, Fulk, & Monge, 2005, p. 487). Since research examining the intricacies of international organizing is limited, the following review will include existing nonprofit discourse and draw on relevant connections with research on for-profit research and domestic organizational studies. The chapter will begin with a brief overview of research examining nonprofit organizing and establish the importance of nonprofit organizing to international communities. Four key studies that explore international organizing will be reviewed. Research conducted by Lauring (2011), Dempsey (2007), Murphy (2012), and Norander and Harter (2011) will provide a framework for understanding the intricacies of international organizing and globalization. Next, literature investigating postcolonial scholarship and power and voice will be addressed. Specifically, the seminal research of Narayan (1997), Shome (2006), Spivak (1998, 1999), and Prasad (2003) will highlight the necessity of a postcolonial perspective to international research. Further, scholarship examining power and voice will provide important considerations for international nonprofit partnerships. The chapter will end with by presenting the research question that guided the subsequent thesis research.

Overview of Nonprofit Organization

Since the inception of colonialism over five-hundred years, hegemonic forces have propelled globalization or the global unification of people, governments, and organizations (Prasad, 2003). As the world has shifted to a globalized system, geographic and national boundaries no longer confine organizational processes; organizations are increasingly serving international communities. International organizations are “formal [arrangements] transcending national boundaries that provide for the establishment of institutional machinery, procedures, and norms to facilitate cooperation among members” (Stohl, 1993, p. 378). Furthermore, international organizations are rapidly changing entities that produce consequences affecting communication, global interdependence, and societal boundaries (Stohl, 1993). Since researchers began investigating international organizing, the theme of injustice has continually emerged (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007). International organizations have substantially marginalized some groups while privileging others. Stohl (2005) situated organizations as the driving force behind globalization; thus, organizations are the driving force behind the disenfranchisement of certain cultural groups. Therefore, the objective of this literature review is to further understand the dynamics embedded within international organizing, specifically collaborative international interorganizational nonprofit partnerships.

While adapting to the exigent constructs of globalization, political and social systems are required to respond to diverse factors. As governmental agencies are not able to satisfy communal needs, nonprofits have become important facets of disenfranchised societies. Within globally structured systems, “nation states (without intention or foresight) [created] a space in which nongovernmental organizations [could] operate, proliferate, and gain competitive advantage” (Stohl & Stohl, 2005, p. 443). This space is referred to as a “structural hole” or a

missing void within the structure of governmental systems; a space which was in need of enterprising activity to maintain and support the necessary services needed by society (Stohl & Stohl, 2005). The results of research investigating structural holes concluded that nonprofit organizations act as the “expertise, databases, and the basic bureaucratic [workers]” for societies with evident structural holes (p.452). The outcomes indicated that nonprofits “...were in a position to fill the bureaucratic as well as ideological space (i.e. the structural holes) [needed in order] to meet the expectations and goals of the [nation state]” (p. 452). Consequently, nonprofits are vital to the survival of many international communities.

Stohl and Stohl’s (2005) research on structural holes demonstrated the need for nonprofits within a globalized society. Research suggested that local, grassroots nonprofits are best at facilitating positive change within their communities (Heath, 2007; Dempsey, 2009; Norander & Harter, 2011; Isbell, 2012). Yet, “due to inequalities in wealth, education, and communication infrastructure,” small, local nonprofits are often unable to independently satisfy the needs of their constituencies (Dempsey, 2009, p. 328). As it has become increasingly difficult for nonprofits to achieve individual success and long-term sustainability, collaborative, interorganizational nonprofit partnerships have emerged and are pillars of nonprofit organizing (Heath, 2007; Dempsey, 2009; Isbell, 2012). Nonprofits engaged in capacity building help their partner organizations achieve economic stability and administrative competencies- fostering greater local resilience and community advancements (Heath, 2007; Isbell, 2012).

Nonprofit collaborations are defined as “autonomous stakeholders with varying capabilities...directed toward mutually accountable, typically innovative ends, producing long-term social change at a local level in a cooperative, relatively non-hierarchical relationship” (Heath, 2007, p.147). In order for collaborations to be successful, it is imperative that the

partnering organizations operate interdependently and share in power and decision-making (Heath, 2007; Isbell, 2012). Research suggests that sustainable, interdependent nonprofit partnerships often emerge through preexisting organizational alliances; past alliances are strong predictors of future partners (Isbell, 2012; Shumate *et al.*, 2005). Further, nonprofit partnerships typically emerge between organizations that share mutual interests and histories (Heath, 2007; Shumate *et al.*, 2005). The following section draws on examples of research that explores the outcomes of nonprofit and for-profit organizations that have built international alliances. The section begins by examining the pervasive organizational outcomes that emerge when organizations do not share power and decision-making amongst international groups. Next, I review two studies that analyze organizations that share traits similar to the aforementioned qualities of interdependence, equitable power exchanges, preexisting organizational alliances, and mutual interests.

International Organizational Research

Even though for-profit international partnerships differ from nonprofit partnerships, it is necessary to extrapolate for-profit research to better understand international nonprofit organizing. In a conventional example of intercultural organizing, Luring (2011) investigated the outcomes of divergent cultural groups interacting within an international for-profit setting. The ethnographic study examined the communication and relationships of 16 Danish expatriate managers with their subordinates in a “Saudi subsidiary of a Danish corporation”; the company was composed of 251 Indian workers, 80 Egyptian workers, and 37 Filipino workers. The intercultural communicative outcomes of the Danish management and the workers in the Saudi subsidiary are important to consider when researching international organizing through an Organizational Communication perspective.

Lauring's (2011) research on international organizing indicated that "differences in styles of communication are inevitable and are often argued to slow down the process of decision making and working processes and they may weaken social ties" (p. 242). The phenomenon of difference produced "negative emotions towards other nationalities [and promoted] a positive in-group perception" amongst the participants (Lauring, 2011, p. 242). Work groups were ineffectively and unethically racially segregated by Danish management as an attempt to reduce intercultural communication misunderstandings (Lauring, 2011). Additionally, power within the organization was monopolized by the 16 Danish expatriates (Lauring, 2011). Danish management distrusted their subordinates; the Danes' lack of trust prevented the workers access to decision-making processes and organizational participation. Even though some Danish management criticized the level of ethnocentrism and blatant segregation present within their organizing practices; the lack of reflexivity and apparent apathy practiced by Danish management caused unproductive managerial/subordinate relationships and resulted in ineffectual organizational communication. Researchers engaged in international nonprofit scholarship can use this study as a reference while addressing and comprehending the complicated dimensions of power, communication, and organizing throughout intercultural groups interacting within organizations.

Even though most nonprofits have positive, holistic objectives, they are not insulated from the pervasive issues highlighted in Lauring's (2011) study. Dempsey (2007) outlined the problematics of voice, empowerment, and accountability within a US nonprofit acting as a grant-making International Funding Group (IFG) to international grassroots movements. Dempsey (2007) used ethnographic methods to unpack the communication and decision making processes

and outcomes of the US based IFG staff members and the local advisor-volunteer representatives of the international grassroots programs.

The IFG's intentions for involvement within the grassroots programs were genuine; they sought to build and implement a faith-based organizational culture that promoted grassroots activists' advising and involvement (Dempsey, 2007). Initially, the staff members of the IFG trusted the advice, recommendations, and activities of the internationally based advisor activists. At the onset, the mutual trust between the staff members and the advisors mitigated the affect of a bounded voice (Dempsey, 2007). Bounded voice is a, "dynamic process in which opportunities for stakeholder voice are strategically and provisionally limited to particular forums" (Dempsey, 2007, p. 322). As the partnership progressed, the actions of the US staff members limited the participation of the international activist advisors in organizational decision making, resulting in the phenomena of a bounded voice. Initially, the international activist advisors made the grant-making decisions; thus, the US staff members' and external stakeholders' voices and abilities to shape grant outcomes were limited (Dempsey, 2007). Over time, the external stakeholders, or the funding agencies, began requesting thorough reports documenting the grassroots' use of funds for programming; reports which accounted for the "quantitative measures of success" (Dempsey, 2007, p.324). The pressure exerted by the external stakeholder caused the IFG staff-members to expand their "evaluation and oversight" of the international activist advisors (Dempsey, 2007).

To remedy the funding agencies desire for quantifiable accounting measurements, IFG staff-members set-out to develop a structured reporting and monitoring system (RMS) (Dempsey, 2007). The funding agencies wanted more information about specific purposes and uses for grants; they wanted a RMS that quantified and thematized the functions of grant funding (Dempsey, 2007). The international advisor activists had limited involvement in shaping the

RMS; “language barriers, uneven access to technologies, and differences in time zones reduced advisors’ ability to meaningfully contribute to the shaping of the RMS” (Dempsey, 2007, p. 324). Unfortunately for IFG staff-members, their attempt to create a RMS proved futile; they were not able to effectively promote the use of the RMS by the activist advisors.

The international activist advisors were against the implementation of a formal RMS (Dempsey, 2007). According to one activist advisor, ““social movements are movements’ that cannot have ‘rules and categories ascribed to them’” (Dempsey, 2007, p. 326). It was evident through the discourse that activist advisors were not ready to adopt *Westernized* practices of accountability. The findings of Dempsey’s (2007) research demonstrated that adversities and inequalities could occur in all organizational contexts, including those designed to facilitate and promote equity and social justice. Even though the intentions of the IFG were genuine and not profit-driven, the external stakeholders still desired formalized reports reflecting the impact of their monetary donations.

Dempsey’s (2007) study documented power, voice, and accountability within international nonprofit contexts as competing international tensions manifested. The research revealed the importance of including all levels and factions of an international nonprofit in building structured accountability systems, congruent with the collaborative nonprofit research conducted by Heath, 2007; Dempsey, 2009; Isbell, 2012. The process of IFG excluding the activist advisors in creating a formalized RMS limited its capacity for day-to-day use. The IFG staff-members’ attempt at appeasing external stakeholders inevitably comprised the empowerment and voice of the advisor activists from the grassroots movements. This study offers Organizational Communication researchers a basis for studying voice within international nonprofits. As previously mentioned, globalization creates systems that privilege some and

silences others. Dempsey's research contextualized the issues inherent to globalization and provided a space for further research to be developed. Moreover, the research on bounded voice and accountability highlighted the issues facing international nonprofits as they attempt to promote social change while satisfying external stakeholder demands.

Lauring (2011) and Dempsey's (2009) studies revealed the problematic nature of international organizations. The main source of contention was the dominant Western force dictating organizational practices and outcomes. The aforementioned research made evident the inequitable realities of postcolonial organizational relationships. However, the previous studies did not address the fluidity inherent within nonprofit relationships. In international, interorganizational partnerships, power relations are not always static (Murphy, 2012). Even though the Western entities possess the "technical knowledge and financial resources", the local, non-Western partners control the critical "cultural knowledge and expertise" essential to the partnership (Murphy, 2012, p.17). Therefore, non-Western partners play an important role in the enactment of organizing activities. The following study accounts for the fluid power imbalances and tensions of a U.S. academic institution (USACAD) engaged in a "twining partnership" with a Catholic, nongovernmental organization in Kenya (KNGO) (Murphy, 2012).

In all partnerships, tensions frequently emerge. Grounded in Tsing's (2005) notion of "friction," Murphy (2012) investigated the power dialectics of a "twining partnership" and situated their organizational tensions as "discursive frictions". According to Tsing (2005), frictions are "co-produced" through cultural interactions and result in "the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference" (p. 4). Organizational frictions are necessary tensions that fuel progression and advancement within international partnerships (Tsing, 2005; Murphy, 2012). As an "active member of the partnership" and

researcher, Murphy (2012) analyzed 24 cultural exchanges between the USACAD and the KNGO to uncover the discursive frictions innate to their intercultural partnership. The research revealed discursive frictions embedded in the conflicting expertise, language use, and social identities of the members of the two divergent organizations (Murphy, 2012).

Within Luring (2011) and Dempsey's (2007) studies, the Western organizations were dominating, controlling forces. In contrast, Murphy (2012) found that the KNGO, the non-Western entity, exerted power in many situations. In one instance, without giving warning or seeking consent, the KNGO made a decision to exclude the USACAD from conducting training-of-trainers in Kenya. The USACAD developed an HIV/AIDS and communication curriculum for Kenyan schools. Typically, while on cultural exchanges, the USACAD-trained-trainers on the use of their curriculum. The USACAD was removed from the training after a complaint was made that the USACAD promoted homosexuality. During one training session, a USACAD member listed "anal sex" as a means of contracting HIV/AIDSs. The KNGO associated anal sex with homosexuality and claimed "anal sex does not exist in Kenya as homosexuality is illegal" (Murphy, 2012, p. 16). Even though the USACAD members had expert knowledge on HIV/AIDS, the KNGO is a Catholic organization that denounced homosexuality. The KNGO enacted power to privilege their local, cultural realities (Murphy, 2012). Diverging from the findings of Luring (2011) and Dempsey's (2007) studies, the cultural knowledge of the KNGO trumped the technical knowledge of its Western counterpart.

In a subsequent interaction, Murphy (2012) described a discursive friction related to language use within the HIV/AIDSs curriculum. Within the discussions, there were macro-level frictions that emerged due to the organizations' external relationships with outside institutions. While deciding what to include and omit from the curriculum, the KNGO needed to ensure the

material would appease the Bishops' Council, and the USACAD was accountable to the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta. The discursive issue surrounded the inclusion of wet dreams. The KNGO considered wet dreams a form of masturbation; yet, the USACAD believed wet dreams were a natural occurrence in life and something that young boys needed to understand. To satisfy the KNGO's desires, the USACAD referred to wet dreams as an act that occurs "unconsciously" (Murphy, 2012).

Further, micro-level frictions occurred as the Kenyan partners shared their cultural experiences that negated the expert knowledge of the USACAD. The curriculum included a section about bodily changes during puberty. In the materials, it stated that girls would grow hair on their nipples during puberty. One of the KNGO members said that she had bathed with women from her tribe all of her life and she had never seen a woman with hair on her nipples. The KNGO's cultural knowledge of lived experience conflicted with the USACAD's technical knowledge on biological processes. In the end, the KNGO and the USACAD had to compromise on the language of the curriculum; thus, power was shared between the two organizations.

Lastly, the social identities of the organizational members produced frictions within the partnership. The KNGO was a Catholic organization. When the USACAD engaged in cultural exchanges with the KNGO they were expected to yield to the religious practices of the Catholic faith, even though they did not identify with that religion. Additionally, the KNGO adamantly and openly opposed homosexuality and two members of the USACAD were homosexual men. "For them to do the work in Kenya—a place where the epidemic is still so prevalent, they 'need' the local Kenyan partners" (Murphy, 2012, p. 26). Therefore, USACAD members had to conceal the true nature of their identities, producing discursive frictions in the relationship (Murphy, 2012).

Murphy's (2012) study demonstrated the power imbalances inherent to international organizing; "power in an international arena [is] dynamic and fluid rather than solidly and completely held in the hands of the 'resource-rich' partner" (p.26). Diverging from typical first-world-third-world organizing practices, Murphy and her colleagues (2012) reflexively approached their partnership with the KNGO; which allowed them to collaboratively work with their partners. In many instances, international organizing and research "reproduces and legitimizes hegemonic colonial discourses and practices" (Norander and Harter, 2011, p.2). To avoid recolonization of international participants or partners, researchers or persons in positions of "power" must reflexively understand their hierarchal positioning through a historical and political context to avoid discursive colonization (Shome, 1996; Narayan, 1997; Prasad, 2003; Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007; Norander & Harter, 2011).

Similar to Murphy, Norander and Harter (2011) engaged in international nonprofit research from a reflexive perspective. The findings of their work substantiated the findings of Murphy's (2012) analysis. Norander and Harter's (2011) research examined Kvinna til Kvinna (KtK), a Swedish based international capacity building nonprofit. KtK strived to "mobilize local culture and knowledge" to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations located in the Balkan region. Corresponding to the USACAD in Murphy's (2012) research, the KtK aimed to practice reflexivity with their non-Western nonprofit partners (Norander & Harter, 2011). Postcolonial reflexivity "[allows researchers] to evolve further their understanding of power by moving beyond domination/resistance and colonizer/colonized to the ongoing struggles in organizational relationships wherein inequities pervade but members willingly participate in such relationships and power ebbs and flows" (Norander & Harter, 2011, p.19). Norander and Harter (2011)

utilized postcolonial reflexivity to ethnographically research KtK and were acutely aware of their identities as privileged Westerner researchers and organizers.

In spite of KtK's conscious reflexivity, their partners still faced struggles of representation, space, and sustainability (Norander & Harter, 2011). KtK actively attempted to listen to the needs of their international partner organizations; the women reported feeling that their Western counterparts thoroughly listened to their voices. Yet, the partner organizations told stories of struggles for representation (Norander & Harter, 2011). KtK's partner organization faced audits and was required to report on the day-to-day activities of the organization, similar to the nonprofit in Dempsey's (2007) study. Through writing the reports, KtK sought to teach their partner organizations the "NGO language" and system (Norander and Harter, 2011). Many of KtK's partner organization felt that true activism was lost in the mist of following Westernized bureaucratic processes; similar to the participants in Dempsey's (2009) work. In spite of their intent to stay reflexive and "resist the typical request for proposal procedures that further marginalize the voices and needs of women by filtering them through Western agendas, their practices of teaching the NGO language also reinforced the hegemony of Western logics in doing development work" (Norander & Harter, 2011, p. 19). Therefore, women faced struggles of representation as the Western practices of organizing trumped their local means of action.

In addition to struggles of representation, KtK's international partners spoke of struggles for space. The authors referred to "space" as, "the ability of KtK to break structures of isolation and oppression and create a space for women of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds to come together" (Norander & Harter, 2011, p. 21). Within many postconflict regions, patriarchal needs are privileged; KtK struggled to find a space where women could be active agents in rebuilding their communities. Moreover, the differences within the partner organizations caused

difficulties that prohibited cohesive unity. In many of their locations, multiculturalism produced divisions between the women, rather than collaboration. These differences produced struggles for sustainability or KtK's effort to build long-term programs that sustained after the KtK members involvement ended. In an effort to build sustainability, KtK attempted to link their partner organizations together. Networking amongst the organizations was difficult because of their cultural differences. Nevertheless, "a commitment to sustainability along with respect for local knowledges are at the core of why KtK links organizations to one another and provides the conditions and resources for their own strategies of resistance to emerge" (Norander & Harter, 2011, p. 24). Even though fostering networks was a struggle for KtK, it was at the heart of their operation and something they continued to do in spite of the organizations' differences.

The findings of Norander and Harter's (2011) research are important; they highlighted that difficulties and inequalities can still emerge within reflexive international partnerships. However, the most important outcome of this study was the theoretical implications that emerged. The researchers chose a reflexive organization, aware of its Western privilege. KtK welcomed the critiques that emerged from the research results and wanted to use the data to further develop the equality of their partnerships. Also, similar to Murphy (2012), the colonial histories that engendered these inequitable outcomes were represented in the study. The authors highlighted the privileged positions of the KtK members and reflexively prioritized their own biases as Western researchers.

Norander and Harter's (2011) study documented an effective use of postcolonial reflexivity. The article provided "a postcolonial feminist framework [which focused] on understanding resistance at a macro level in terms of how organizations are positioned within international civil society while at the same time allowing for attention on the micro-level

indigenous voices and stories that actively create alternative futures” (Norander & Harter’s, 2011, p.25). As Norander and Harter (2011) conducted their research, they strived to focus on the voices and realities of KtK’s partners. Nevertheless, Norander and Harter (2011) caveated their research with a statement invoking their inability to fully understand or speak for the non-Western women. The effective use of their methodology demonstrated the importance of researchers becoming aware of their biases and positioning within a globalized system. The following section illuminates the practice of postcolonial reflexivity and the necessity of its use for the development of equitable research and organizing. Issues of scholarly inheritance, power, and voice will be reviewed as they are the precursors that have engendered a need for postcolonial reflexive practices.

Postcolonialism: Scholarly Inheritance, Power, and Voice

Historically, Western colonialism sought to establish political, military, and economic hegemony over non-Western peoples and places (Shome, 1996; Prasad, 2003). Modern colonialism, on the other hand, seeks to discursively colonize its “subjects” through establishing a constellation of cultural and ideological precedents (Shome, 1996; Prasad, 2003). Consequently, discursive texts have become “sites of power” where Western scholars have “knowledge over” and subjugate native groups and people (Shome, 1996). Even though some researchers are becoming aware of their privileged Western identities, imperialistic tendencies continue to be embedded in Western scholarship. Contemporary imperialism operates through discourse and the “native” is subjugated, commodified, and colonized linguistically through discursive texts (Shome, 1996). An early scholar of postcolonial studies, Shome (1996), challenged imperialism in Western works. Shome (1996) advocated for the use of postcolonial theory or “a critical perspective that primarily seeks to expose the Eurocentrism and imperialism

of Western discourses...[manifested] in discursive practices of ‘first world’ countries in their constructions and representations of the subjects of ‘third world’ countries and/or racially oppressed people of the world” (pp. 41-42). Postcolonial theory situates international research at the “intersection of ideas and institutions, knowledge and power”; positioning marginalized populations within a multifaceted, informed historical context (Prasad, 2003, p.8).

Much of Western scholarship depicts “third world countries as places without histories” (Narayan, 1997, p. 48). Populations of the third-world are often spoken of as one cohesive category. Contextual variations present in non-Western cultures are absent as third world populations are homogeneously grouped as one (Shome, 1996; Narayan, 1997; Prasad, 2003). Prasad (2003) argued “that different countries and societies are *not* postcolonial *in the same way*” (p.28). As researchers attempt to deconstruct populations different from their own, they often fail to consider the unique intricacies inherent to individuals they are studying (Shome, 1996, Prasad, 2003). For instance, if a researcher is investigating participants of a particular country or region, it is problematic to only consider racial and ethnic identities while constructing analyses; class, gender, geographic histories, and other attributes significantly affect a participants experience within their racial or ethnic group. The theory of intersectionality accounts for the divergence among members of the same ethnic or racial categories (Davis, 2008). While the original interpretation of the theory specifically focused on women; this theory is extremely important to consider while examining other minority groups. Intersectionality refers to the different ways in which “race, class, and gender interact in the social and material realities of [individual] lives to produce and transform relations of power” (Davis, 2008, p. 71). Thus, intersectional theory urges researchers to avoid placing third world minority groups into

inclusive categories; instead, it suggests that researchers view participants as their “crystalized” selves and privilege the many facets of their being (Davis, 2008; Tracy & Tretheway, 2005).

As postcolonial academics have urged researchers to consider the distinctiveness of their participants, Shome (1996) considered the importance of generalization or essentialism to critical scholarship. In order for scholars to critique and develop understandings about the populations they are researching, it is necessary to propose some inferences about the participants in which they are making inquiries. Yet, Shome (1996) questioned, “does [essentialism] not lead to a kind of colonization all over again, where the critic becomes the voice of authority that determines what constitutes or does not constitute a particular cultural or racial identity?” (p. 47). To avoid “re-colonization” through subjugating and speaking for participants, Spivak’s (1998, 1990) notion of “strategic essentialism” can be utilized. Strategic essentialism refers to the notion that the researcher is *aware* of their essentializing and they are doing so in order to achieve a specific research goal (Spivak, 1998, 1990; Shome, 1996). For example, if a researcher is attempting to uncover an international phenomenon, he or she may strategically essentialize a population to extrapolate important insights critical to the research. Therefore, while it is necessary for researchers to avoid the tendency to over generalize any one population based on a specific identity characteristic, it is also necessary that researchers mindfully essentialize to advance understandings of international organizing.

Postcolonial theorization is paramount to Western academics. Western scholars are able to research and “know” Eastern populations because of the inequitable outcomes of the colonial period (Shome, 1996; Narayan, 1997; Prasad, 2003). To avoid “re-colonizing” participants, Western researchers investigating third-world populations need to be acutely aware of their privileged Western positions and the conditions that have fostered the divergence in their place

as researcher versus “subject”. To practice postcolonial reflexivity, researchers must “unlearn” their privilege as Western researchers (Spivak, 1998, 1999; Shome, 1996). Researchers can “unlearn” their privilege through the process of extensive self-reflection. Through practicing extensive self-reflection, researchers seek to understand their place within a larger political, ideological, and institutional context. As researchers begin to understand the dynamic, active sources of their identity, they can approach their research from a postcolonial stance; creating “a new discursive space to include marginalized Others without devaluing the sociohistorical circumstances that have allowed for one group to be in a position to ‘empower’ another” (Norander & Harter, 2011, p. 6).

Along with unlearning Western privilege and practicing postcolonial reflexivity, it is necessary that researchers consider and question the Western texts that frame their perceptions and understandings (Shome, 1996; Dixon, 2007). As academic disciplines uphold and pass-down “truths” from generation-to-generation, “scholarly inheritance” occurs and facilitates the continuance of “re-colonization” (Shome, 1996; Dixon, 2007). A majority of scholarship is situated within a Western reality; and, “instead of examining how the [canons themselves are] rooted in a larger discourse of colonialism and Western hegemony, [researchers] frequently use the [canons] to appropriate the ‘other’ voices” (Shome, 1996, p. 46). Consequently, researchers repeatedly enact discursive colonization while analyzing and making inferences about their non-Western participants based upon Western ideologies and discourse.

Scholarly inheritance has generated the notion that power is enacted through domination (Dixon, 2007). Nevertheless, scholars are now questioning Foucault’s (1980) “power over” concept that pervades academic literature (Dixon, 2007; Murphy, 2012). Dixon (2007) “reinherited” Foucault’s understanding of power and revealed that power is a truly relational,

fluid phenomenon; similar to the findings of Murphy's (2012) experiences within her postcolonial partnership. Concurrently, instead of individuals and organizations having "power over" other individuals and entities, individuals and organizations willingly constrain themselves to achieve pleasure and fulfill their own desires (Dixon, 2007). "Friendships or relationships that provide partners a sense of well-being, pleasure, and personal self-actualization could manifest a power that, as it grows in pleasure, could supersede the power of transactional, organizationally structured relationships (such as manager-subordinate) to shape organizational behavior" (p. 291). Accordingly, as organizational members negotiate power dynamics within their relationships, they do so out love instead of fear; thus, power is a relational phenomenon.

Within nonprofit partnerships, the distribution of power can determine the success or failure of the relationship; research has proved the importance of interdependency within nonprofit partnerships (Heath, 2007; Dempsey, 2009; Norander & Harter, 2011; Isbell, 2012; Murphy, 2012). Power inequities are leading causes of failure within nonprofit partnership (Kirby & Koschmann, 2012). Yet, power disparities within international organizing and nonprofit partnerships are quite commonplace as evidenced by the literature posited above. In spite of the inequalities, "members willingly participate in such relationships" (Norander & Harter, 2011, p.19). When members willingly participate in relationships where power is not equally distributed amongst partners, collaboration is reduced and difficulties arise (Kirby & Koschmann, 2012). To understand how nonprofits members navigate unequal power relations, it is necessary to further consider research examining voice and silence.

Though it has yet to be studied in international contexts, silence has domestically been a point of inquiry for Communication scholars. Domestic nonprofit research revealed that power differentials among interdependent nonprofit stakeholders lead to most failures within

interorganizational collaborations (Kirby & Koschmann, 2012, p.148). Further, scholars Milliken, Morrison, and Hewlin (2003) examined the effects of hierarchal relationships within for-profit organizations. Their findings illustrated the incidences that can lead to the nonprofit failures noted by Kirby and Koschmann. Subordinate individuals often feel as if they are “unable to raise an issue or concern...even if they felt the issue was important” within hierarchal relationships (Milliken et al., 2003, p. 1458). The less empowered individual often silenced themselves out of the fear of damaging the relationship; thus, restricting necessary organizational changes (Milliken et al., 2003). Projecting the findings of individual contexts, it is assumed that within interorganizational partnerships, one organization may adopt the dominate role and the other the subordinate position.

Milliken et al. (2003) indicated that subordinate organizational members silence their issues and concerns. Often times, organizational members do not feel as if they have a platform to speak out. Voice opportunity is “the actual availability of the opportunity to present one’s views to a decision maker” (Avery & Quinones, 2002, pp. 81-82). However, when organizations and their members are given an opportunity to voice themselves, the speech itself may not affect organizational changes. Avery and Quinones (2002) revealed that even if subordinates felt obliged to speak out, the “instrumentality” of their voice may be limited (p. 82). They defined voice instrumentality as “the influence of the individual’s voice behavior on the outcome of a decision” (p. 82). It is assumed that hierarchal relationships limit the instrumentality of certain organizational voices. Consequently, nonprofits engaged in collaborative international interorganizational partnerships need to examine their voice opportunities, behaviors, and instrumentally to understand the dynamics of their partnerships.

Summary and Research Questions

The previous literature offered important considerations for scholars interested in international organizing. Literature examining nonprofit organizing highlighted the significance of nonprofits to the holistic sustainability of international communities (Stohl & Stohl, 2005). Further, successful nonprofit partnerships were found to be interdependent organizations that share in power and decision making and have connected through their preexisting organizational alliances and mutual interests (Shumate *et al.*, 2005; Heath, 2007; Isbell, 2012). The marginal research investigating international organizing indicated that Western entities often monopolize power within nonprofit partnerships and cultural and geographical differences preclude effective international organizing (Lauring, 2011; Dempsey, 2007). Nevertheless, Murphy (2012) and Norander and Harter's (2011) studies concluded that Western researchers and organizers can develop sustainable international nonprofit partnerships through self-reflexivity and by privileging local knowledge and practices. Murphy's (2012) and Norander and Harter's (2011) research demonstrated the effects of relational power in practice and made evident the outcomes of providing voice opportunities to non-Western partners.

As the literature on postcolonialism revealed, Western researchers have the tendency to discursively colonize their research participants (Shome, 1996; Prasad, 2003). To avoid recolonizing the participants in this research, I actively worked to stay reflexive of my privileged position as an educated, Western researcher. Moreover, to avoid the harmful effects of scholarly inheritance, I have worked to "unlearn" my previous conceptions of international organizing (Shome, 1996, Dixon, 2007). Before I thoroughly understood postcolonial reflexivity, I saw third-world populations as societies in need of rescue (Norander & Harter, 2011). Instead, now I view my non-Western participants as local experts in need of resources to manifest their own

futures. As a Western researcher and analyzing nonprofit and international organizational literature, I determined the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What factors promote the development of international capacity building partnerships?

Research Question 2: How do power dynamics affect international nonprofit partnerships?

Research Question 3: What factors contribute to the success of international nonprofit capacity building partnerships?

To further the positive progression of international nonprofit capacity building research, I will research these questions using the postcolonial reflexive practices presented by Murphy (2012) and Norander and Harter (2011). Through consciously addressing the circumstances that have allowed for me to be in position of the “researcher”, I will offer the diverse perspective of the “Other” through privileging their voices in my research.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

As we packed our belongs into two small cars, we said our good-bye to the Sisters in Thigio. Our next stop was Athi River. I had absolutely no idea what to expect as we drove down the winding roads of rural Kenya towards Nairobi. I imagined it to be similar to Thigio; green land, open spaces. In Nairobi, we stopped at a Nakumatt, Kenya's equivalent to "Wal-Mart" on the way to the KCN headquarters. Unlike Wal-Mart's stereotypical senior-citizen greeter, security guards with a metal detector greeted us to Nakumatt upon our arrival. There is an indescribable energy in Nairobi; I felt alert.

We slowly made our way through Nairobi traffic and headed south towards Athi River. As we drove, the scenery dynamically shifted. Driving south, the landscape was more industrious. Cement factories were everywhere and large trucks with poor exhaust systems polluted fumes into the air. The air changed. The air in Thigio was clean; this air was not. The first thing I noticed when we drove into Athi River was how dirty everything was; the streets were covered in garbage. The town lacked a comprehensive sanitation system. The KSN arranged for us to stay in a hotel, a ten-minute walk from their headquarters. When we arrived, there was an animal carcass hanging in the front window, the hotel butchered the meat. This sight was hard to digest, as a strict vegetarian, I have never enjoyed the taste or sight of meat. My room was tucked in the far back corner of the hotel. There were dried dead mosquitos on my wall and my shower faced my non-working toilet in my very small bathroom. As I stood mortified in my hotel-room, I was most pained by the fact that I knew my accommodations were significantly better than a majority of the living arrangements in Athi River. I felt guilty for being so turned-off by the hotel. Later at night, it got worse. My room was directly underneath the area the staff stayed. Late into the night and early into the morning sounds flooded into my room. I

cried that first morning. The gentlemen responsible for our stay at the hotel was so kind and sincere, yet I felt so vulnerable and afraid. It was hard for me to accept the reality of Athi River, how do people live like this?

As evidenced by the narrative above, this research was an emotional experience. Fortunately, my research methodology provided an avenue for dealing with and analyzing the emotions I experienced as a researcher. The following chapter illuminates my research methodology. The chapter begins with an overview of the organizations studied, and I provide a description of the research sites. Then, I detail my method of inquiry, one-on-one in-person interviews and participant observations, including the lens of postcolonial reflexivity and the emotionality of being a field researcher. Upon establishing my method of inquiry, I outline and describe the research participants. To conclude, I summarize the process of data analysis.

Organizations and Research Sites

Research participants were selected from three organizations: the United States Capacity Building Organization, the Kenyan Catholic Nonprofit, and the Kenyan Secular Nonprofit. The United States Capacity Building Organization (USCBN) was a US-based nonprofit; the USCBN worked to build the capacity of Kenyan organizations seeking to improve the health and well-being of their local communities. The USCBN worked closely with the Kenyan Catholic Nonprofit (KCN) and the Kenyan Secular Nonprofit (KSN). The KCN and the KSN partnered with the USCBN because both organizations aimed to strengthen the holistic well-being of their communities through providing education, services, and resources. The USCBN's core competency was their AIDS/HIV education program, the Health and Wellness Communication Program (HWCP). The USCBN designed the HWCP and collaboratively developed the program

with their partner organizations, the KCN and the KSN. I travelled with the USCBN to Kenya as a HWCP volunteer. While in Kenya, we were hosted by the KCN and the KSN. The following section begins with a brief background of the USCBN. Then, the KCN and the KSN are described; including a description of the research sites.

United States Capacity Building Nonprofit (USCBN)

The US Capacity Building Nonprofit (USCBN) formed in 2008. The founding members are staff and faculty of a Midwestern Catholic University. The group travelled to Kenya in 2004 with the Catholic University on a federally funded project. Through building relationships with local nonprofits on their thrice yearly visits, the founding members realized the need for expert health and wellness educational programs in Kenyan communities. After informally partnering with local organizations, the USCBN established itself as a secular nonprofit in 2008.

Headquartered in a large Midwestern, US city, the USCBN was a volunteer-based organization that strived to build the capacity of Kenyan nonprofits focused on HIV/AIDS prevention and care, as well as community health and wellness. USCBN members are experts in the field of public health and communication; together they worked to build the capacities of Kenyan nonprofits through providing sustainable knowledge and organizational support. On their trips to Kenya, the USCBN members collaborated with the KCN and the KSN to deliver HIV/AIDS and health workshops, leadership and empowerment training, and organizational development initiatives. Further, the USCBN assisted their partner nonprofits in grant writing and fundraising.

Kenyan Catholic Nonprofit (KCN)

The USCBN initiated its partnership with the Kenyan Catholic Nonprofit (KCN) on their first trip in 2004. The KCN is a well-established Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent DePaul organization located in Thigio, a small rural area near the Rift Valley just outside of Nairobi. The

KCN members working in Kenya are Catholic Sisters from Africa, Europe, and the United States. The Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent DePaul provides health resources, educational services, and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment to poor and marginalized communities. In Thigio, the KCN focused on community needs by providing a preschool with resources for the mentally and physically handicapped. Further, the KCN responded to local issues through the provision of healthcare and education and training. The KCN was run by a team of Catholic Sisters and local staff members paid through grants and donations.

We stayed at the KCN's compound in Thigio for the first four days of our trip. Thigio is a largely uninhabited stretch of rolling green land. Foliage and trees were ever present; it was beautiful to see acres and acres of unspoiled space. Scattered amongst empty dirt roads and lush vegetation were various stone and tin houses; there was ample space between each home.

The KCN compound had multiple spacious buildings, including a Church, and they kept a garden and livestock on the grounds. We conducted our HWCP workshops in one of their large community buildings. The room was spacious and full of light. The compound had electricity and running water; their amenities were well beyond many of their neighbors. Thigio is an impoverished community. Many residents of Thigio lack direct access to health care, education, and basic resource. The homes we visited did not have indoor plumbing or running water; one home had electricity, three did not. In spite of the poverty in Thigio, the landscapes were gorgeous and the homes were well-kept.

Kenyan Secular Nonprofit (KSN)

USCBN's relationship with the Kenyan Secular Nonprofit (KSN) also originated during their first trip in 2004. Founded by two local community members, the establishment of the KSN followed a trajectory similar to the USCBN. The KSN informally began community service in

2004 and officially incorporated as a nonprofit in 2008. Since its inception, the KSN has ventured to empower the youth in their community through providing HIV/AIDS and sexual reproductive health education and resources. The KSN was operated by four grant-funded staff members, with the support of unpaid interns and local volunteers.

The KSN was located in Athi River, an industrial slum outside of Nairobi, Kenya. Unlike Thigio, Athi River was barren and unkept. The dirt roads were dusty and littered with piles of garbage; we often waded through garbage as we walked. Women and children waited in long lines for water. The tin shacks and cement homes were stacked on top of one another. Smoke from the nearby cement factories lay dense in the air. We stayed in a hotel walking distance from the KSN headquarters. Both structures had electricity and our hotel had running water, but the buildings were bleak. We conducted our HWCP workshops in two local schools. The school I attended had a cement building with rectangle cut-outs for doors and squares for windows. The space was poorly lit and contained only a chalk board, front table, and rows of desks with benches for the students. The urban poverty of Athi River accentuated the hardships that were not as readily apparent amidst Thigio's lush vegetation.

Method of Inquiry

Methodology for data collection included one-on-one in-person interviews and participant observations. In July of 2012, I traveled as a volunteer to Kenya to observe and participate in a capacity-building exchange between the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN. During a period of two weeks, I worked with the USCBN to deliver HWCP workshops to the Thigio and Athi River communities, and we helped distribute supplies and collect data on the HWCP. While we conducted the HWCP workshops in Thigio and Athi River, I interviewed the three members of each organization. I also interviewed Tara during one of our free afternoons. In

addition to the interviews, I observed daily activities and interactions. Upon my return from Kenya, I conducted the remaining interviews with Alex and Lisa. Researchers Lofland and Lofland (1984) regarded in-person interviews coupled with participant observation as “the central techniques of the naturalistic investigator” (p.13). Interviewing enables the researcher “to elicit from the interviewee rich, detailed materials that can be used in qualitative analysis”; while participant observation allows the researcher to capture the participants in their natural settings (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, p. 12). Before I provide more details on the interview and participant observation methods, it is important to address how postcolonial reflexivity and my own emotionality factored into my method of inquiry.

Postcolonial Reflexivity

As mentioned in Chapters One and Two, Western researchers have the propensity to direct and guide their research from a Western perspective. To avoid misguided research and analysis, I consciously practiced postcolonial reflexivity. Reflexivity is an integral component of postcolonialism; as the Western researcher “seeks to learn about the Other, [it] puts the cultural Others in a position to allow for [the Westerner] merely to reflect back on themselves” (Noradner & Harter, 2011, p. 6). I struggled during our stay in Athi River. In comparison to my Western standards, the places we stayed in were run-down and dirty. I thought my home-stay during my study abroad in the township of Khayeltisha in South Africa prepared me for the trip. However, in Athi River, I experienced an emotional reaction to the things I saw in the field. It was difficult for me to watch children go without adequate sources of food and water. I also struggled to watch the children playing amongst the garbage. Throughout our stay, I kept asking, “Why?”. It was easy to use the inequitable differences that existed between Kenyans and myself as a means of personal reflection. Yet, to fully engage in postcolonial research, it was necessary

to move beyond personal reflexivity and open reflection to a pragmatic scope that considered the colonial histories of the research participants and the consequences of those histories on present day life.

As I shifted my focus to the conditions that created the variations in our existences, I avoided viewing Athi River as “[a place without a history]” (Narayan, 1997, p. 48). Fifty-years ago the British empire controlled Kenya (Johnson & McEnroe, n.d.). At the end of Britain’s reign, widespread rebellion and corruption occurred; thousands of Kenyans were killed (Johnson & McEnroe, n.d.). The scars of colonialism are still visible in Kenya; vast inequalities are commonplace throughout the country. Therefore, I considered many facets while evoking postcolonial reflexivity in my examinations. Following the precepts of postcolonial reflexivity, I was acutely aware of my identity as a privileged Caucasian Westerner throughout the process of data collection and analysis (Narayan, 1997; Norander & Harter, 2011). I was mindful to contextualize the circumstances I experienced through a postcolonial lens. After the initial shock wore off, I was able to see prosperity where I first saw decline. The communities I visited were not afforded the same resources and securities I had as a Westerner. Operating through the lens of postcolonial reflexivity, I was able to view the members of KCN and KSN and the members of their communities as equals, co-researchers, while also being mindful of the circumstances that allowed for me to be in the position of researcher versus participant (Spivak, 1998, 1990; Narayan, 1997; Noradner & Harter, 2011).

Emotionality of Field Research

Utilizing postcolonial reflexivity in my research allowed to me better situate my uncomfortable experiences, but it did not circumvent the emotionality of researching in the field. “Being a researcher can be an emotionally stressful experience” (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, p.

32). I felt safe when we walked around Thigio, both during the day and at night. Most community members did not seem to notice our presence; if they did, they were kind to us as we passed. In comparison to Thigio, I felt very unsafe while we were in Athi River. People noticed us. They tried to talk to us and touch us as we walked past them on the street. While some individuals were friendly; many people stared at us as we passed by. I was eager to leave Athi River; I was anxious and unsettled during our visit. Further, witnessing the daily lives of individuals with whom I was interacting with was personally difficult. As my emotions proliferated, I struggled not to view the participants as “objects of rescue” (Norander & Harter, 2011). Scholars have noted the number of researchers that have the tendency to abandon their studies to help their participants (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). I experienced a similar desire repeatedly throughout our trip. While we were in Athi River, one of the workshop participants asked to drink from my water bottle. I had to tell the participant no; I said it was because then I would have to give everyone a drink and there was not enough to go around. The participant told me that she had not had a drink of water all day. As someone passionate about health and wellness, their lack of nutritious food and water was difficult for me to accept. I felt as if my research was superficial in comparison to the work I could have been doing.

I experienced a great desire to withdraw from the settings as I experienced physical and emotional discomfort (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). On top of the emotions I was experiencing from my desire to help the participants, I was also physically uncomfortable during our first few days in Athi River. The running water was not working in our hotel and I felt undernourished. In the end, I remained dedicated to my research and my commitment to include the participants as collaborators in the research conversation, rather than individuals in need of my help. Nevertheless, as a researcher engaged in postcolonial reflexivity, I feel it is important for me to

account for the struggles I faced in the field. Instead of suppressing the hardships, I am taking ownership of my experiences to prevent a misguided analysis. Researchers need to consider their emotions before analyzing data (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). Consequently, I hope the transparency of my experiences will build awareness for the perils of international research and urge future postcolonial scholars to account for their emotions.

Interview Participants

Upon selecting the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN as organizations of foci, I strategically selected members from the three organizations to recruit as interview participants. To generate credible data, I followed the proposed guidelines of scholars, Rubin and Rubin (2005), and enlisted the help of a “general [informant who had] already observed the scene” (p.65) to help me select participants. A member of the USCBN who was not involved in the interview process, Laura, introduced me to members from the three organizations. Once I was introduced to the members of the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN, I chose knowledgeable interviewees, experienced in the capacity building work I intended to study (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). I selected interview participants “whose views [reflected] different, even contending, perspectives” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 64). Therefore, both executive and staff members were solicited to participate in the interviews. The following three sections outline and describe the interview participants of the study; three participants were selected from each organization. Participants’ names have been changed to protect their anonymity.

USCBN Interview Participants

As mentioned, Laura introduced me to the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN. Coinciding with Laura’s recommendation, I asked Alex, Lisa, and Tara to be interview participants. All three participants were Caucasian Americans, with postgraduate degrees, and were 25-35 years

old. Alex was the Executive Director of the USCBN and he organized the USCBN trip I attended in summer 2012. Lisa was a member of the Catholic University group that made the first trip to Kenya and the founding Executive Director of the USCBN. Currently, Lisa is an active organizational member and she was one of the creators of the HWCP. Tara travelled with me to Kenya on my 2012 trip and was my partner facilitator for the HWCP workshops we conducted in Thigio and Athi River. Alex and Lisa had made dozen of trips to Kenya and it was Tara's second visit to the research sites.

KCN Interview Participants

I interviewed two Catholic Sisters from the KCN, Sister Elizabeth and Sister Catherine; along with a paid KCN staff member, Scott. Sister Elizabeth was a Caucasian from the United Kingdom and Sister Catherine was a Caucasian from the United States; both women were between the ages of 60-65. Scott was a local Thigio community member, between 30-35 years of age. He was educated and he spoke English. Scott was a community liaison for the Sisters; he provided direct service to the people. He was also actively involved in the HWCP. Scott both facilitated and trained others on the program manual.

KSN Interview Participants

While I was in Athi River, I interviewed the cofounders of the KSN, Robert and Paul, and a paid-staff member of the organization, Melissa. Robert, Paul, and Melissa were local Kenyans; all between the ages of 25-35. The three participants were college educated and spoke English. Robert and Paul were obvious candidates for participation given the longevity of their partnership with the USCBN. As a staff member, Melissa worked to implement and facilitate the HWCP; she was an active organizer of the HWCP in the Athi River community.

Interview Methodology

To best incorporate postcolonial reflexivity, I viewed each interview as a “partnership” in which the participants and I endeavored on a “conversational research journey” (Miller & Crabtree, 2004, p.186). Further, the interviews were conducted at locations most comfortable to the interviewees. I asked each of the participants to choose the location of her or his interview sites. This phenomenon is referred to as a “grass hut” setting or a “usual, everyday location where the research topic is discussed, as opposed to a ‘white room’ or sterile context site” chosen by the interviewer (Miller & Crabtree, 2004, p. 194). A total of 7 interviews were conducted in the field; the remaining 2 interviews were completed immediately upon my return to the United States. Interviews ranged from approximately 9 minutes in length to 36 minutes; on average, the interviews lasted 22 minutes with a combined total of 198 minutes and approximately 150 typed pages.

Using a semistructured interview format, I developed a series of open-ended questions to direct the conversations (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). At the beginning of each interview, I asked the interviewee permission to record our conversation. After the interview, I transcribed the interviews and used the 138 pages of transcriptions as data for my analysis. During data analysis, I transcribed laughter, tone, rate, and pauses to capture the full range of the conversation (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). When I was unsure of what was said, I noted “something was unclear” (Rubin & Rubin, p. 204, 2005). To privilege the participants’ voices, I provided a detailed transcription for my analysis. This interview data gives voice to the traditionally marginalized “Other” within international Communication research and provide diverse perspectives to the field (Norander & Harter, 2011).

To best include the participants' voices, the participants "coconstructed" the trajectory of the interview through their responses to the question prompts (Miller & Crabtree, 2004; Lofland & Lofland, 1984). Two sets of question prompts were used in the interviews; I asked the KCN and the KSN one set of questions and the USCBN the other (see Appendix). The question prompts were descriptive questions; descriptive questions "enable a person to collect an ongoing sample of an informant's language (Spradley, 1979, p. 60). As the participants answered the initial questions, I would prompt further information by asking example questions and contrast verification questions to ensure I collected well-rounded data.

Participant Observation

Participant observations are a vital supplement to interview data. Participant observations are more than a simple observance of a researcher's surroundings. Participant observations include developing relationships and joining in the routines of the participants (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw, 1995). As a volunteer engaged in the capacity building initiatives of the USCBN, I enjoyed the advantage of being a "known" researcher while conducting observations; I benefited from "knowing the individuals" I was observing (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). I frequently engaged with the participants on a peer-level so my status as a researcher did not have as great of an impact on the participants' behaviors. Further, the participants were well acquainted with the members of the USCBN with whom I travelled, which facilitated initial interactions.

The findings of my observations built context and supplemented the information I received during the interviews. In total, I conducted approximately 40 hours of participant observations over a two-week period. Observations occurred during workshops, feedback sessions, and downtime. While conducting observations, I systematically accounted for my observances and experiences by keeping a written record (Emerson, et al., 1995). Even though I

was a known researcher, I inconspicuously jotted notes while in the field. At the end of each day, I synthesized my findings and reflexively recorded my experiences through journaling. As recommended by Emerson *et al.* (1995), I “included [myself] as a character in the interactions” (Emerson, et al., 1995, p.82). Additionally, I worked to capture the essence of my experiences by jotting notes as quickly as I could and by accounting for my senses and the environment of my surroundings.

Data Analysis

To best allow for the voices of the participants to come through in my writing, the analysis of the interview and observation transcripts was performed through the framework of grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Within international research, grounded theory is “*the most used method*” of discourse analysis (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009, p. 71). Grounded theorists work to construct the social reality of their subjects (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). To construct the social reality of the participants, I began by reading and rereading the interview and observation transcriptions to familiarize myself with the data (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Charmaz, 2004). After reading through the transcriptions and taking memos on my initial impressions, I scoured the data line-by-line for concepts or “words that stand for ideas contained in the data” using the process of open coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 159). In order to *reflexively* interpret the data, I primarily developed concepts using “in-vivo codes” or concepts stated directly by the participants (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Charmaz, 2004). I used in-vivo codes instead of a predetermined coding system to best give voice to the participants’ responses. Once I reached saturation with in-vivo codes, I reread the data to abstractly construct codes by the interpreting the material. The codes readily formed into four themes indicating positive outcomes of the international collaboration including

the importance of early alliances, the power of relationships, and, the effectiveness of collaboration, and the creation of local sustainability. The data also clearly showed some areas where both structurally and relationally, power, voice, and privilege are still in question for some of the partnership members.

Through adopting the lens of postcolonial reflexivity, I was able to circumvent any misguided analyses that could have resulted from the emotions I experienced as a field researcher. As presented, I conducted my research at two sites, Thigio and Athi River. Three organizations participated in the research, the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN. Each organization was equally represented during the one-on-one-in-person interviews and the participation observations. The following chapter, *Chapter Four: Analysis of Emergent Themes*, analyzes the findings that emerged from the framework of grounded-theory, as highlighted in the paragraph above. Chapter Three offers important considerations for future researchers interested in postcolonial research and organizing; as I accounted for the struggles I endured while conducting my research, and in return, used the emotions I experienced and the struggles I encountered as a tool for deeper analysis and inquiry.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF EMERGENT THEMES

Through the systematic analysis of the interview transcripts and participant observation data, I identified four emergent themes: Building Alliances, The Power of Relationships, The Importance of Collaboration, and Creating Local Sustainability. The following four sections describe and analyze the emergent themes manifest in my research findings. Each section includes concrete examples from the data and extrapolations of their significance to the overall findings. The first section, Building Alliances, identifies the initial alliances formed by members of the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN through their mutual Catholic affiliations. Before the USCBN was an established entity members of the organization traveled to Kenya with a Catholic institution. On their first visits, members from the three organizations were introduced and formed a bond. The initial bond between the organizational members transitioned into powerful relationships. Section two, The Power of Relationships, explores the consistency, respect, trust, friendship, and personal satisfaction inherent in the partnerships. Those factors produced strong organizational relationships that allowed the members to operate from a relational power-base and promoted collaboration between the partners.

Through the USCBN's reflexive practices, the USCBN built collaborative partnerships with the KCN and KSN. The third section, The Importance of Collaboration, highlights the efforts of the USCBN to generate localized programs through constant feedback from their partners. Specific examples will demonstrate the USCBN's reflexivity and the collaborative outcomes of the organizing processes. The collaborations developed sustainable programs that mutually benefited all three groups. Creating Local Sustainability, the fourth section, outlines the outcomes of their collaborative partnerships. Through the organizations collaborations, they were able to build sustainable programs that reflected local knowledge and practices. Further, this

section will demonstrate how the USCBN's capacity building work fostered organizational sustainability for the KCN and the KSN. While a majority of the responses positively correlated to the themes described above, there were tensions that emerged which both challenged and reinforced these themes. The final section, Partnership Tensions, will explore the tensions; using them as a lens for understanding the true nature of the partnerships.

On a cold Chicago morning, in early February 2012, I trudged to a quaint neighborhood on the North side of the city to meet with USCBN's Executive Director, Alex. Members of the USCBN are involved with multiple projects in Kenya; many through the USCBN and one with the Catholic University. Weeks earlier, I had spoken with Laura concerning my desire to conduct research on capacity building work in Kenya. Laura suggested I meet with Alex to discuss the various projects I could analyze; to better understand which project my research interests would best fit. After being introduced by email, Alex and I decided to meet face-to-face at his office. His office was tucked away on the fourth floor of a modest building on the Catholic University's campus. Upon entering his space for the first time, I immediately experienced Alex's intimate involvement with Kenya. The Kenyan flag was proudly displayed throughout his office; as well as other mementos he acquired on his many trips to Kenya. He pointed to a woven basket on one of his shelves and proudly declared it was a gift from the KSN.

After our initial greetings, we sat down and began informally introducing ourselves to one another. He described his involvement with the USCBN and his role in the Catholic University's Kenyan project. Then, I informed him of my desire to understand the dynamics of international nonprofit partnerships. Our conversation continued for the better part of an hour; I did my best to follow along with the winding stories of Alex's vast dynamic Kenyan experiences.

From our initial conversation, it was obvious Alex and the USCBN members were personally entrenched in their Kenyan work. Alex spoke of KCN and KSN members like distant relatives and friends. I was thoroughly intrigued by the personal nature of the relationships Alex described. I quickly knew I was not interested in the Catholic University sponsored project; I wanted to research the USCBN's relationships with the KCN and the KSN.

Fast forward five months and I was able to see Alex's stories come to life as I arrived to the KCN compound. After landing in Nairobi and traveling through the countryside on capricious gravel roads, we finally arrived to the guest quarters of the KCN. In pitch-black darkness, we were greeted by Sister Elizabeth. She was just as Alex described, small, yet undeniably powerful. As we entered the guesthouse, Sister Elizabeth hugged Alexia and in true familial fashion said, "Alexia, you look tired and a bit pale, you need some rest." Sister Elizabeth's brazen observation demonstrated the breadth of the relationship between the two organizations. I stood there quizzically, stunned by her comment and eager to see what the morning would bring...

Building Alliances

Once I chose capacity building partnerships as a focus of study, I began to consider the factors that would produce relationships that engender their successes. Therefore, one of my research questions became, What factors promote the initiation of capacity building partnerships? Early in my analysis, a relational theme readily emerged. Each interviewee discussed their relationships with members of the other organizations and its importance to the success of the partnership. After conducting a more thorough analysis, it became apparent that the bond between the members of the USCBN and the members of the KSN and the KCN acted

as the impetus for their partnership. At first, I lumped relational phenomena into one category. Yet, upon further analysis, I uncovered distinctions between the USCBN's relationship with the KCN and the KSN and the initial alliances that formed those relationships. When members of the USCBN first traveled to Kenya, they did so before formalizing as a nonprofit organization. Members of the USCBN were introduced to the KCN and the KSN through their mutual Catholic affiliations. The USCBN did not have a formalized agenda when they met the KCN and the KSN; so, members of each organization had opportunities to form organic alliances with their organizational counterparts. Alliances undeterred by organizational objectives; which allowed the USCBN to build genuine alliances with the KCN and the KSN. Therefore, KCN and the KSN did not view the founding members of the USCBN as a formalized, Westernized entity; instead, they viewed them as knowledgeable professionals interested in aligning with them to develop Kenyan communities. The trajectory of the USCBN and the history of the organization and their partners are outlined in responses below.

Four years before mobilizing as an official nonprofit organization, the founding members of the USCBN traveled to Kenya on a trip sponsored by their employer, a large Midwestern Catholic University. The USCBN's affiliation to the Catholic University was the heart of the organizations' inception. Through the University, the founding members initiated HIV/AIDS work in Kenya by means of a PEPFAR grant. Tara, USCBN board member, explained PEPFAR and the reason the Catholic University was chosen to work in Kenya:

My understanding, like I know there is certain countries that get the PEPFAR grant, this one in particular we were twinned with because [we are a] Catholic university, [the Kenyan government] is intertwined with the Catholic Church, as well...umm and so I think they chose us and they really wanted that connection between, because they thought we had the same morals and values and we would work well together.

PEPFAR or the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief is a comprehensive initiative funded by the United States' government (pepfar.gov). Work funded through PEPFAR grants aim to build "sustainable programs [that are] country-owned and country-driven"; programs that "address HIV/AIDS within a broader health and development context" (pepfar.gov). The PEPFAR grant linked a large, Kenyan, Catholic non-profit to the U.S. Catholic University. The Kenyan non-profit oversees Kenya's educational system and the Catholic University was paired with the KEC to help them develop and implement an HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention programs within the Kenyan school system. The founding members of the USNCB established their Kenyan roots through the partnership with this original nonprofit. As the original partnership progressed, the founding members of the USCBN were introduced to members of the KCN and the KSN.

The KSN and the KCN were aligned early on as both had ties to the Catholic Church. The interview responses of the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN members all indicated that the organizations' relationship to the Catholic Church was a foundational factor that contributed to their alliances - the alliances that produced the capacity building partnerships that emerged once the USCBN established itself as an independent entity. Tara explained the Catholic link that solidified the connections between USCBN and their partnering organizations in the following statement:

The KCN again were somebody who we were linked with through the Catholic University connection...the relationship with the USCBN and the KSN again started with the Catholic University connection because one of the cofounders was originally studying to be a Vincentian Priest.

The work of the KSN and the KCN are not directly related; but the three organizations all had mutual ties through their relationships with the Catholic Church. Sister Elizabeth spoke of

KCN's first meeting with the founding members of the USCBN, when they visited as members of a Catholic institution:

In August 2005, Garret and Alexia and Lisa came to do a workshop for us. To educate the staff on HIV and AIDs.

As she told the story of the first visit, Sister Elizabeth smiled. I could tell she enjoyed reminiscing about the early days of their partnership.

Since the USCBN members traveled to Thigio before formalizing as a nonprofit, they were able to build a credible connection with the KCN through their Catholic affiliation. While speaking about KCN's relationship to the USCBN, Sister Elizabeth mentioned the role the Catholic University played in building a strong relational foundation between the organizations' members:

SE: I think because we have a good relationship with the Catholic University

J: Okay so you think that your previous relationship with Catholic University itself has made your relationship with the USCBN strong, because you had that foundation?

SE: Yes, yes I think so...

J: How long have you been working with the Catholic University? Do you know?

SE: We've been here, umm we've been working with them 12... 8 years now

J: So, it's really been years of working together?

SE: Yes...

Throughout our interview, Sister Elizabeth frequently referred to the USCBN as the "Catholic University group" and did not distinguish between the first visits of the founding members from the subsequent visits as official USCBN members. Alex spoke of the lack of acknowledgement in the following statement:

With the KCN first, I feel like sometimes they think of us more as the Catholic University group than the USCBN group umm because we were Catholic University group when we first met them and the USCBN didn't exist (laughs)

The KCN's lack of recognition for the USCBN's as a stand-alone, secular organization will be addressed later in the analysis, as it affected the relationship between the organizations' members.

Diverging from the responses of KCN members, KSN members readily spoke of and distinguished the USCBN as a formidable nonprofit entity. Yet, their connection to the USCBN followed a trajectory similar to that of the KCN. The KSN was connected to the USCBN through the organizations' relationships to the Catholic Church. Further, they began their work with the USCBN before they formalized as a nonprofit. However, unlike the KCN, their Catholic roots played a smaller role in solidifying the KSN's strong relationship with the USCBN. The foundation of the KSN and the USCBN's partnership originated from the *connection* between Robert and Garret. Robert met the members of the USCBN through their mutual Catholic network; but, outside of the preliminary introductory role, Catholicism had little to do with the continuance of their relationship. During the interview, Robert explained his initial meeting with the founding members of the USCBN:

Umm and then umm this was about the same time the team from the Catholic University umm then the MPH program, Garret, Abbey, Alexia, and Alison and several others came in 2004 and we had interactions then, we met and talked and all that.. so slowly by slowly they were already tuned into what we were doing, umm in the initial stages and moving forward, lots of encouragements came from them, umm on issues to do with HIV/AIDS preventions and trying to develop materials for us to be able to use ummm in schools and all that...

Robert went on to discuss how the relationship started:

Umm I would say the way it started, we just met with Garret on the corridors in DePaul Um... both of us were working late so that was about I guess 12/midnight or something about that then we just started talking, discussed, shared umm what I was doing and

what he was in Kenya, why he came to Kenya and all of that and kind of umm in quotes was something like “love at first sight”...

Robert and I laughed together when he referred to their initial relationship as “love at first site” and then he stated:

Okay, okay...Alright...and umm we um were able to develop from that small outside premise from just meeting and talking and sharing what we were doing, then he introduced me to everyone present and umm had very fruitful discussion and getting to know each other...

Paul spoke similarly to Robert while discussing the initial alliance between the KSN and the USCBN. He discussed the relational elements that developed the alliance between the members of the two organizations together:

The USCBN came on board... Actually I would say in the very initial days... umm years of our organizations and um I would say I have seen the relationship between the KSN and the USCBN grow overtime from just mere contact... Just started as, Robert brought them on board... I would say he is a friend to Garret and at the end of the day it has shifted from just personal relationship into a better thing...

Paul recognized that the “personal relationship” between Robert and Garret manifested an alliance that acted as a gateway to the KSN/USCBN partnership. Moreover, diverging from the KCN, both Paul and Robert attributed the partnership to Robert and Garret’s relationship, not the Catholic link that introduced them.

The alliances that the USCBN developed with the KCN and the KSN were both similar and different. As organizations, the KCN and the KSN both aimed to eradicate AIDS/HIV and elevate public health and wellness in their communities. Yet, the KCN and the KSN operated at different ends of the spectrum in terms of their ability to independently carry out their work. When the USCBN began working with the KCN, the KCN was an established, funded organization. The KCN greatly benefitted from the assistance and support they received from the

USCBN; however, the aid provided by the USCBN was supplementary to their current programing.

Disparately, the KSN was a newly forming nonprofit and required a great deal of support from the USCBN to get off the ground. Even before formalizing as a legal entity, the USCBN desired to build the capacity of organizations conducting HIV/AIDS prevention work in Kenya and the KSN struggled to sustainably enact programs within their communities. The initial relationship Robert built with the founding members of the USCBN led to a partnership between the organizations that allowed for the KSN to develop and launch effective programs. Alex described the first year of the USCBN's relationship with the KSN and their growth as an organization:

With KSN, we started partnering with them right when we were becoming and organization and they were becoming an organization... so they were legally incorporating....and then over like a year, year and a half they really formalized, they got a mission, they got a vision, they got a space, they had a lot of volunteers, they started getting a reputation in the community so we kind of watched them grow from this, you know group of people that were doing lots of work to a real formal NGO and then we did try to work with them a lot on trying to get them off the ground, they were an all volunteer organization and they were running entirely off their own money...

As Alex indicated, the USCBN began to formalize and solidify as a nonprofit at the same time the KSN began developing as an official nonprofit organization. Through the alliances they formed with the KCN and the KSN; the founding members of the USCBN aspired to expand their capacity building work outside of their KEC funded project.

To work with other organizations, like the KSN and the KCN, without breaching the boundaries of their PEPFAR grant, the USCBN had to establish itself as a legal entity to acquire

funds and continue outside work. Alex, a USCBN board member, explained the path of their expansion:

The main project was with KEC...we had a capacity building partnership between [the Catholic University] and KEC so that's what the grant funded us to go to do... and we realized we had a lot more free time when we were there...

The USCBN members connected to members of the KSN "early on"; Alex described these initial stages:

It was very early on that we actually met Robert and started doing work with KSN as they were getting started... So we decided that we wanted to incorporate our own 501c3 here in the US so that we could work with other NGOs in Kenya outside of our KEC project...

It was the work they began before solidifying as a nonprofit that acted as the impetus for the formalization of the organization. Alex spoke about the trajectory of the work and the necessity for taking steps towards establishing a "legal entity":

We basically were trying to leverage as many resources as we could so while we were in Kenya and we had a free night or we had a free weekend or we could come a day early or leave a day later... and do workshops with another NGO we figured we might as well leverage those resources And then, if we set up our legal entity outside of the Catholic University that gave us the flexibility to write grants to solicit funds, you know have fund raisers and kind of do our own thing... and so that's kind of where the USCBN came from...

Furthermore, Lisa, another founding USCBN board member, described the necessary, pragmatic nature of the USCBN's development:

it was also very natural in the sense that we were doing work outside of our Catholic University sub grant and that work was not related to our grant at the University and also there were some very practical, logistical restrictions on grants at the Catholic University so also from a very pragmatic point of view it was something we needed to do if we

wanted to keep kind of doing our work but setting up the opportunity for a separate funding stream...

As Alex and Lisa described and as evidence from the aforementioned quotes, the USCBN members made local connections and began working with two organizations, the KCN and the KSN, before incorporating to a 501 c3. Thus, the founding members of the USCBN developed alliances with the KCN and the KSN as individuals interested in promoting the well-being of Kenyan communities; and not as a Western nonprofit seeking to establish their own means of organizing.

In sum, the initial alliances the USCBN formed with the KCN and the KSN acted as an impetus for their future relationships and organizational initiatives. Members of the USCBN organized and legalized themselves as an official nonprofit so they could utilize their auxiliary resources to support the efforts of the KCN and the KSN. While studying nongovernmental organizations engaged in HIV/AIDS work through collaborations with the United Nations and the World Health Organization, Shumate et al.(2005) discovered that past alliances were strong predictors of future partners (Shumate et al., 2005, p. 501). They stated, “once partners have chosen each other and alliances have been formed, structural inertia tends to stabilize the links relative to changes in the environment surrounding it” (p. 490). The findings of Shumate et al. (2005) indicated that alliances or mutually beneficial associations act as a stimulus for long-term relationships and organizational partnerships, similar to the alliances formed by the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN.

Further, it was revealed that organizational cohorts are strong predictors of organizational alliances (Shumate et al. 2005). The USCBN and the KSN both established themselves as nonprofits at roughly the same time, rendering the organizations part of the same nonprofit cohort. The USCBN assisted the KSN with its development, despite the fact that it was a newly

forming organization at the initiation of the partnership. Comparatively, the KCN was an established organization at the inception of its alliance with the USCBN and the alliance between the USCBN and the KCN was strong. The secular nature of the USCBN and the KCN's Catholic roots produced a relationship much different from the relationship the USCBN had with the KSN; those differences will be discussed later in the analysis. The following section outlines the relationship between the two organizations and demonstrates the powerful effects of relationships on the outcomes of organizational efforts.

On our second afternoon in Thigio, I hurried over to the main residence on the KCN compound for lunch. Each day we stayed with the KCN, we ate our lunch and dinner with the Sisters in their main dining area. I came to love these encounters, they provided me an opportunity to informally observe and interact with the USCBN members and the KCN member. Each meal began with a prayer, followed by a buffet style spread.

At our first lunch, the Sisters proudly showed me their guestbook and asked me to sign my name in the ledger. The guestbook was worn from the many visitors that came before me. As I signed my name, the Sisters eagerly waited to show me the multiple entries of past visits from the USCBN. Sister Colleen took me through the book and pointed to the names of various USCBN members. Later that evening, the guestbook was brought out again at dinner. One of Sister Colleen's counterparts walked me through the previous visits of the USCBN members. Pleased, she flipped through the pages and found their names one by one. At subsequent meals, the guestbook was shown. I could feel the Sisters' joy as they recollected the prior visits of the USCBN members.

The Power of Relationships

The initial alliances that were formed by the founding members of the USCBN provided a basis for the relationships that transformed into partnerships once the USCBN formalized as a nonprofit organization. As previously mentioned, upon analyzing the interview transcriptions, relationship was a theme that continually emerged from the data. At the onset, it may seem as if Building Alliances and The Power of Relationships are the same. However, the alliances that formed between the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN were built before the USCBN formalized as an official nonprofit. Since the founding members of the USCBN built alliances with the KCN and the KSN before organizing as an official entity, the subsequent relationships were based on genuine, personal connections and not on organizational necessity. This section, The Power of Relationships, focuses on the trajectory of the relationships after the USCBN formalized as a nonprofit organization; whereas the previous section examined the relationships prior to the USCBN's official inception.

For the purposes of this analysis, I have identified the term relationship as a connection between two or more individuals, organizations, or communities. A majority of the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN members responded positively when asked to describe the connection or relationship between the organizations. For instance, Sister Elizabeth referred to the overall relationship between the USCBN and the KCN as "excellent". Upon analyzing the interview responses correlating to the relational aspects of the partnership, several micro themes emerged: consistency, respect/trust, friendship, and personal satisfaction. Through the lenses of the micro themes, the following paragraphs outline the relationship between the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN members, the USCBN's relationship with the community members of Thigio and Athi River, and the power dynamics that formed as a result of these relationships.

The opening narrative about my experience during mealtime at the KCN outlined the importance of the USCBN's consistent visits to the overall positive relationship between the two organizations. Sister Elizabeth spoke confidently about the USCBN's visit when she stated:

They come three times a year...At least three times. And, they always come and visit us. And if we want a workshop done, before they come, if I let them know, they'll do it. We know they are coming and they always write to us and say would you like us to do a workshop, will be up in Thigio on such a date.

The USCBN members traveled to Kenya three times a year to do work associated with their PEPFAR funded project. During their free-time, they traveled to Thigio and Athi River to work with the KCN and the KSN. As mentioned in the dining room story, the interactions I had with the KCN members while in Thigio supported Sister Elizabeth's interview response. The consistent visits helped to establish the bond the organizations visibly had with one another.

Further, Robert addressed the consistent communication between the KSN and the USCBN:

Umm I would say, umm our relationship and partnership has been good...Umm we've got constant communication back and forth between us and USCBN... and looking into new possibilities of our engagement, what more can we do with this partnership and take it forward to greater heights... soo umm not really a weakness but I think it's a strengthen where we are all looking out into what each other can become...

Robert did not mention the consistent visits in his interview; but, he did account for their "constant communication". While I engaged with Robert outside of our interview, he told stories of their many visits. He spoke about the USCBN members meeting his family and the visit he and Paul took to Chicago. It was evident from those conversations that the consistent visits helped support and sustain their relationship.

Robert communicated the respect the KSN had for the USCBN when he referred to the "looking into new possibilities of our engagement" as a strength, rather than a weakness. Robert respected the USCBN and trusted that they have the KSN's best interests at heart. While we

discussed additional aspects of the KCN's relationship with the USCBN, Sister Elizabeth stated, "Other people can come and they wouldn't have the knowledge that the Catholic University people have..." Sister Elizabeth's response demonstrated the trust the KCN has for the USCBN; they respected their knowledge and trusted that they would perform better than other organizations. Further, when I asked Tara to name the greatest strength of USCBN's relationships; she replied, "The greatest strength of the relationship? That's an interesting question... umm I would say the respect and trust we have for each other..."

The respect and trust the organizations had for one another was the foundation of the collaborative work that took place between them. While dissecting the early alliances between the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN, the initial differences in the relationships between the USCBN and the KCN and the USCBN and the KSN were apparent. The KCN valued the USCBN's Catholic roots; whereas the KSN availed the technical assistance provided by the USCBN members. To respect the Catholic values of the KCN, the USCBN had to adapt the materials they delivered at the Health and Wellness Communication Program (HWCP) workshops. Tara discussed the changes the USCBN made to adhere to the beliefs of the KCN:

There are definitely things that we as an organization wouldn't do if we didn't respect them... for instance they didn't want us to passing out condoms during the workshop but we understand where they are coming from and the respect that we have for them and so we don't do that, but they also respect us and trust us and what we do in getting that knowledge out there and they let us talk about things that go against what the Catholic Church has to say...

The trust and respect the KCN and the USBCN had for one another helped to foster a relationship between the two organizations that allowed them to work together in spite of their differences. Sister Elizabeth explained, "I suppose they have built up a relationship with us...And

I think this is beautiful really because, they came here as strangers to us. And we've got to know them so well and as you say they've done so much for us we are grateful."

The relationship between the organizations superseded the boundaries of a traditional business relationship. When describing his phone calls with Alex, Robert said they were, "not always business...we've tried not just to limit it into business because umm we'll fall into the tendency of being bureaucratic which is still good, but then umm wanting to know how is everyone doing at the Catholic University and in Chicago... and the USCBN." Robert said when it came to their friendship and the business aspects of their relationship, they "separate the two... We've got a way I think of doing that... where we have umm just catching up and getting to know how everyone is doing and then when we have serious issues to handle then it remains of that." The interactions I observed between the USCBN and the KSN supported Robert's statements. When we arrived to the KSN headquarters each day, we never moved directly into formal "business"; conversations began with informal talk and gradually moved to the day's agenda.

The relationship between the members of the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN were personally impacting. Tara said:

I mean I just think it's such an amazing organization and I'm very grateful to be a part of it... and be able to help in any way and any capacity I can because when I'm here the people just touch my heart and in a way that can't really be explained and any help that I can do to them live healthier, happier lives um is something that makes me feel good is something that I want to be a part of, I hope to continue this work for awhile. After Tara expressed her heartfelt connection to the USCBN and the work she carried out through the organization, she finished by stating, "it is very personally fulfilling." Tara's behavior in the field also communicated the satisfying nature of her work. Her interactions with the KCN and KSN were genuine; it was obvious that she thoroughly enjoyed herself. Tara

remembered specific details about her partners; she would ask questions about their families and recall past stories they had shared. Additionally, Tara made relationships with members from the two communities. While we were hiking during our free time one afternoon, we stopped by the house of a local woman who worked with the KCN. The woman remembered Tara and Alexia from their previous trips to Thigio and they reminisced about their past visits. Further, Scott said the USCBN, “has impacted [him] personally and it has simultaneously had a big impact on the community.” The commitment the members had to their capacity building work translated to fulfillment for both the members’ themselves and the Thigio and Athi River communities at large.

Through the respect and trust that was built by the USCBN’s consistent visits to Kenya, the Thigio and Athi River communities were able to generate relationships with the USCBN’s members. Both communities received many benefits from the KCN and the KSN’s relationship with the USCBN. The USCBN provided resources and knowledge to the communities. Along with the beneficial aspects of the partnership, the community members established personal connections with members of the USCBN.

While discussing the successful aspects of the partnership, Sister Elizabeth quoted the greatest success as the USCBN’s “communication with the people.” She said, “They have very good communication skills...and I think that’s how the students have learned [at the workshops]... they are friendly with them... And I think they have accepted them and they know why they have come and they know they are going to gain by their experience.” Sister Elizabeth’s statement revealed the importance of the community engagement to the overall relationship between the two organizations. While it is important that the KCN and the USCBN members have a strong relationship, it is also necessary for the USCBN to connect with the local

community. The USCBN aimed to build the capacity of the KCN and the KCN's mission to serve and support the people of Thigio. Connecting with the local community allowed the USCBN to better perform their role as capacity builders.

Speaking with Sister Colleen confirmed Sister Elizabeth's sentiments of the USCBN's relationship with the Thigio community. The USCBN's consistent visits allowed for the community members to feel comfortable with the USCBN members. Sister Colleen said, "Garrett and Lisa and Alexia and Alex are kind of familiar and known and the people open up to them..." The level of comfort the community has established with the USCBN provided a platform for the work they do. Sister Colleen explained, "you're not looked down upon if you come to those workshops...People want to come rather than stay away". Sister Colleen attributed the HWCP workshops' popularity to the USCBN's ability to understand the local population. While describing the USCBN's relationship with the community, Sister Colleen stated, "they have a sense of a need of the people who they are helping in more ways than one..." The USCBN's ability to understand the local community was the foundation of the sustainable aspects of the partnership that will be discussed later on in the analysis.

Robert spoke similarly to Sister Elizabeth and Sister Colleen when he discussed the USCBN's involvement in the Athi River community. He lit up when he described the time the USCBN members met with his family. However, I sensed the deepest emotion in his voice while he talked about the USCBN's effect on the Athi River community. Robert said:

The other thing I would say is having you people here and interacting with the kids, some of these kids sorry to say would never move out of Athi River or even Nairobi umm and umm if they could interact with different people from different parts of the world, it is a blessing on their lives. It is something great for them I would say that they can interact and get to know that the world is bigger than their worldview...

Robert described the USCBN members' interactions with the community members of Athi River as a "blessing". Of the nine interviews I conducted, Robert's comment above resonated with me the most. Before I transcribed the data, I remembered those words. The relationship between the USCBN and Athi River transcended the capacity building work performed on the ground; the USCBN members holistically impacted the Athi River community through providing them cultural exposure they may have otherwise not received.

The relationships that the USCBN developed with the KCN and KSN and their local communities allowed for collaboration within the partnerships and the sustainability of their work once the USCBN returned to the United States. Even though the USCBN was responsible for the technical and material resources that drove their partnerships with the KCN and the KSN, the organizations shared power through their strong relational ties. This phenomenon will be analyzed in the next section, collaboration. As discussed in the literature, shared relational power drives positive organizational outcome (Kirby & Koschmann, 2012). Members of the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN were not coerced into participation; they desired to have involvement in the partnerships. The relationships and mutual desire for participation in the partnership promoted equal involvement between the organizations. Dixon (2007) found that relational power supersedes traditional, transactional "manager-subordinate" arrangements. Since the USCBN built strong relationships with members of the KCN and the KSN and desired to have truly collaborative work, their positional power as the Western counterpart with resources was diminished and power between the organizations flowed fluidly; similar to the relationships analyzed in Murphy's (2012) study. Once established, the USCBN was able to build upon the genuine relationships they had with their partners through the members' abilities to reflexively

understand their identity as privileged Westerners and through the collaboration between the organizations that will be discussed next.

A few days after we arrived to Athi River, the KSN invited the USCBN volunteers to their headquarters for a HWCP feedback session. As a new volunteer, I was interested to hear the KSN's experiences facilitating with the manual, as they had far more experience than myself. My fellow USCBN volunteers and I walked down the dusty, noisy road from our hotel to the KSN headquarters. Upon our arrival, we were greeted by Paul and Melissa. Ten of us squeezed into a small cement room. Plastic chairs were arranged in a quasi-circle and the meeting slowly began....

I did my best to pay attention to the words of the KSN members; however, I was distracted by the loud noises coming from outside....Metal workers banged and sawed on pieces of pipe mere feet from our door. It was evident that Tara valued the feedback of the KSN members. She actively listened and asked pertinent questions to further understand their comments. The USCBN shared suggestions with the KSN and the KSN shared their experiences, too. Tara diligently noted all of their concerns and promised to relay the findings back to the USCBN team in Chicago.

It was refreshing to be a part of the feedback session. Prior to leaving for Kenya, I envisioned the USCBN delegating and instructing the KSN and the KCN on the HWCP. Instead, I realized the USCBN truly came to learn...

The Importance of Collaboration

The strong relationships between the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN provided a platform for equality and shared decision making amongst the organizations. Collaboration was a consistent theme throughout the data I collected in my participant observations and interviews. As it emerged in the data, collaboration is defined as the collective action of both organizations to produce an equitable outcome. The USCBN aimed to build the capacity of the KCN and the KSN through collaborating with them to build their existing programs. While discussing capacity building and the nature of the USCBN's work, Alex said, "we weren't just going off and opening a clinic or opening something...we were partnering with an organization that already had that and then helping them to do their work more." Therefore, the USCBN was not trying to work independently; their goal was to collaboratively partner with other organizations.

The following section outlines collaboration. I will begin analyzing collaboration by examining the USCBN members' practice of self-reflexivity. I detected a great deal of self-reflexivity amongst the USCBN members during my observations and the interviews. I will illustrate how the USCBN's reflexivity allowed them to work collaboratively with the KCN and the KSN. By collaborating with their partners, the USCBN was able to develop localized programs that privileged the needs of the Thigio and Athi River communities. The USCBN consistently sought feedback from the KCN and the KSN to evolve their programs to better reflect local values and practices. After analyzing the outcomes of the USCBN's reflexivity and their efforts to improve the programs based off local feedback, I will provide specific instances that illustrate the collaboration that occurred between the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN. To conclude, I will examine the mutual benefits of the partnerships. The USCBN was responsible for a majority of the resources that supported and sustained the partnerships; yet, the USCBN still received many benefits from their involvement in the work.

The USCBN members did not explicitly address self-reflexivity in their interviews; however, I was able to observe many acts of self-reflexivity and statements made during the interviews indicated reflexive practices. As mentioned in the literature review, self-reflexivity is derived from a Westerners' ability to understand the "the sociohistorical circumstances that have allowed for [them] be in a position to 'empower' another" (Norander & Harter, 2011, p.6). The USCBN recognized the inequities between life in Chicago and life in Kenya and worked to maintain equality within the partnerships despite these differences. Contrasting from my experience in South Africa, the USCBN saw themselves as experts; yet, they vigilantly worked to respect and protect the agency of the KCN and the KSN members. While I was in South Africa, the US entity did not actively work to include their South African partners and solely made all decision surrounding their support of the Khayelitsha community. The USCBN empowered the KCN and the KSN to use their shared resources to address the most pertinent needs of the community and did not lead or direct the outcomes of their support; specific examples are provided later in the analysis.

Alex inadvertently displayed reflexively during the interviews. He made comments like, "part of that is a reality that we are from a wealthier country"; he understood why there were differences between the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN. Part of the reflexivity was displayed when Alex spoke of USCBN's ability to work collaboratively with their partner organizations. He made it clear that the USCBN privileged local action and ideas; they were not trying to micromanage their partners. Alex said, "we don't really have a strategic plan with them, in terms of how we want to grow with them, but it's more of we have a relationship with them if they have a need, they can express it to us and we'll see if we can help fill that need..." The USCBN did not join their partnerships with preexisting understandings of the work that was to be

accomplished. They realized that even though they were the “resource rich” partner, it was important that they honored the cultural knowledge and resources of the KCN and the KSN. Similar to the findings of Norander and Harter (2011), the USCBN “[recognized] their power and position in relation to their partners but [strove] to collaborate in ways that [allowed] for reciprocity of knowledge and power and for transformation to occur” (p.19). The USCBN’s mission was to alleviate the HIV/AIDS epidemic and to raise the level of public health in Kenya; but, they were open to letting their partner organizations decide how their mission could best be accomplished.

Corresponding to Alex’s description of the USCBN’s work above, the USCBN did not premeditate the HWCP they enacted with the KCN and the KSN. Alex explained how the program originally initiated:

But from my understanding of how it arose, umm and Lisa and Garret and Alexia were more of the creators of it, but it was they went to Thigio on their, I think second trip maybe, it was probably their second trip and the Nuns I think just said, ‘just do some HIV prevention for the youth’... and I think they just grabbed some newsprint and Garret from his knowledge about HIV started doing like STI/HIV/AIDs basics, transmission kind of stuff and as we started going back to Kenya we started doing more and more of those kind of workshops.

The program created by the USCBN was constructed in the moment and the USCBN responded to the immediate needs of the KCN; then overtime, they worked to collaboratively develop the program with both the KCN and the KSN to reflect Kenyan knowledge.

While speaking with Tara during our interview, she corroborated Alex’s statement when she said, “it’s kind of evolved to what are the needs there and how can we help them with those needs.” As the partnerships progressed, the programing the USCBN provided expanded to address the changing needs of the local Thigio and Athi River communities. Tara explained, “I

think that pretty much everything we have done has adapted [the programs] to be culture to the ways in Kenya, we really try to make sure we are culturally sensitive.” When asked to describe how the USCBN builds cultural sensitivity into their programs, Lisa provided the “Health Shield” example. In the HWCP, the workshop began with an image of the shield found on the Kenyan flag. The USCBN used the Kenyan shield as a metaphor for health and continually referred to the shield during their presentations.

The USCBN’s cultural sensitivity derived from their consistent efforts to seek feedback from the KCN, the KSN, and local community members. The USCBN gathered program feedback both formally and informally. While discussing feedback, Tara explained their process as being present and listening to the community members; she said, “I think the primary way we’ve been able to do it is by being here so often, and really listening to stories and really listening to the people and getting feedback from them.” Alex’s description was more direct; he said, “we just sat with them and asked if they had any feedback about what we should put in the manual or what we should include or incorporate.” I observed both activities in Kenya.

Corresponding to Alex’s description, in Athi River, we sat with the staff and volunteers of the KSN to discuss program materials. We examined best practices, as well as their experiences in the field. The staff and volunteers described what was working for them and what was not working within the workshops. The USCBN members took notes on the discussion and later reported their findings to the administrative members of the USCBN. Further, Tara and I conducted a week-long workshop at an Athi River school. One afternoon we discussed procedures for water purification. After we presented the program material, one of the students mentioned “water guard” as their method for purifying their water. Neither Tara nor I were familiar with the product; Tara took note of the name and we later researched “water guard”. We

later found that water guard is simply diluted bleach. Through listening to and following up with the students' stories, the USCBN was able to identify information to include in the HWCP materials.

During our interviews, Alex and Tara provided specific changes that the USCBN made to their program content to build cultural sensitivity. Even though most Kenyans speak English, the USCBN's HIV/AIDS wellness program did not directly correlate across cultures. The USCBN used the feedback they received from the KCN, the KSN, and from program participants to adapt and modify program materials to better reflect Kenyan knowledge and practice. I witnessed these adaptations during my observations in Kenya. First, Tara explained Kenyans' views on HIV/AIDS and mosquitos and the necessary changes that were made to correspond with Kenyan understandings. She said:

for instance the myth of HIV being transmitted via mosquitos, that's a big thing here and we spend a lot of time talking about it to make sure we are dispelling that myth... where as if we were doing this in the United States we may not spend as much time...

Tara reflexively understood the cultural differences that necessitated the inclusion of the "mosquito myth" in the Kenyan programing. The USCBN realized the need for this adaptation and combated further misunderstandings by implementing the feedback they received from previous workshops.

Additionally, Alex described program changes made to address Kenyan language and word usage. At the end of each workshop, the USCBN handed out program evaluations to participants. Alex said:

So we'd do a workshop with the youth and then we would have them fill out these session evaluation forms afterward... And they rate on like a likert scale how helpful this information was to them, if they think they can apply it in their daily life... Umm anything they would change for the next time this workshop is done... and then we would

take that back and read through and say they didn't understand when we were saying semen instead of semen... or they didn't understand when we were saying this technical thing or they say play sex we say have sex...

The USCBN's acute attention to feedback allowed them to privilege cultural ways of speaking and further adapt the program materials as Kenyan. The aforementioned examples featured two types of feedback; Tara's example was a content-based change, whereas Alex's example corresponded to Kenyan pronunciation and word use. Both examples enabled the effectiveness of the program materials and their long-term sustainability.

Along with soliciting feedback, the USCBN's close contact with the Thigio and Athi River communities allowed them to address pertinent issues as they developed. Sister Colleen shared the story of the 2008 elections in Kenya. After the elections, there were "clashes [that translated] into violence." Thigio community members emotionally suffered after the 2008 elections; Sister Colleen told me that the USCBN developed programs to assist the Thigio community in dealing with their grief. She said, "I think they respond to what they are able to respond to". She discussed that the USCBN is not able to address all of Thigio's issues; but, they did what they could to incorporate local issues into their programs.

Workshops in Kenya were collaboratively produced by the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN. When the USCBN traveled to deliver the program, the KCN and the KSN were responsible for planning and hosting the workshops. Sister Elizabeth explained, "if we want a workshop done, before they come, if I let them know, they'll do it. And then we plan it. And, we provide the accommodation for them when they come; the students, the rooms we use." In accordance to Sister Elizabeth's statement, program implementation was collaborative in nature. The USCBN created the program and supplied the program materials, and the KCN planned and coordinated the actual workshop by gathering participants, recruiting a chef to prepare the meal,

and by providing a space. Sister Colleen explained the collaboration process in her following statement:

Scott got the people, Scott was able to work with Sister Elizabeth and get the four women, the two that made the meal today and the two that made the meal tomorrow. And then the USCBN has paid for the food and has paid for the people who helped here... It's not like were helping you so you do it for nothing too, it's easy to volunteer if you have a base...But if you yourself are needy it's hard to do it for nothing... So they have a sense of a need of the people who they are helping in more ways than one...

Sister Colleen's statement demonstrates the self-reflexivity inherent within the USCBN's collaborative efforts. Instead of taking advantage of their positionality, the USCBN recognized the disparities between themselves and the people of Thigio, and they worked to provide the support the community members needed. Similarly, the KSN also coordinated the workshops we conducted while in Athi River. Prior to our arrival, they prepared our living accommodations, recruited two schools to participate, and organized the snack we provided to the participants. The KCN and the KSN were responsible for coordinating the programs on the ground; but, the USCBN provided the funds and materials that covered for the tangible expenses.

Further, the USCBN collaborated with the KCN and the KSN to ensure that the programs corresponded to the organizations' beliefs and missions. On our first full-day in Thigio, Tara checked-in with Sister Elizabeth to make certain that the USCBN respected the wishes of the KCN. Condom demonstrations were a part of the HWCP; the USCBN also planned to give workshop participants a supply of their own condoms. The USCBN felt it was important for the workshop students to know how to use condoms and to have condoms of their own. Yet, since the KCN was a Catholic organization, Tara asked Sister Elizabeth if it was okay if we gave the condoms out at the workshop. Sister Elizabeth said the demonstrations were fine; but, she did not want us to give condoms out to the participants to take home. Tara readily obliged her request in

spite of her belief in the importance of the condom giveaway. And, because of their established relationship, Sister Elizabeth could trust Tara. Even though the USCBN members and volunteers were responsible for delivering the program; Tara collaborated with the KCN and allowed the Sisters to adapt the way the content was distributed.

The USCBN also collaborated with the KCN and the KSN to train their members on the HWCP. The USCBN wanted to ensure the programs could be delivered in their absence. They provided training and resources to the KCN and the KSN to promote the independent execution of the program. Robert said, “lots of our young people here benefitted from lots of their training, one as a peer counselors, peer educators and all that... all of them trained by the team, the USCBN team...” The USCBN promoted the agency of the KCN and the KSN to deliver the programs in the ways that worked best for their respective communities. Scott said, “I have been trained ...now we can go to the village... Because of the training, the other health personnel were able to go into the community.” The USCBN staff trained the KCN and the KSN staff, who in return trained other facilitators. Through empowering the KCN and the KSN to be agents of their own programming, the program was able to reach far more individuals than the USCBN could on their few visits each year.

In addition to the initial training, the USCBN continually worked with the KCN and the KSN to develop their facilitation skills. Melissa said, “like the interaction we did yesterday was very beneficial... cause they get to learn new things from new people and by so doing you enhance the facilitation in the schools.” Melissa was referring to the feedback meeting I described in the narrative at the beginning of this section; the informal meeting USCBN members had with the KSN on our July visit. We met with the KSN to discuss what worked well for them and the changes they felt needed to be made to the training manual. This meeting was

beneficial to both the KSN and the USCBN. The KSN received tips on how to better deliver the program, and the USCBN discovered changes that could improve the HWCP.

Apart from the HWCP, USCBN members collaborated with the KCN and the KSN to develop each organization's local programs and strategies. The USCBN provided support through financial, resource, and technical assistance. Robert explained, "the USCBN has been very instrumental in like uh assisting us do grants, write proposals, and do fund raising for sanitary towels for other stuff." The following paragraphs provide specific examples of the USCBN's collaborative relationship with the KCN and the KSN and the outcomes of their capacity building initiatives.

The USCBN effectively built the financial capacities of the KCN and the KSN through their collaborations. As previously stated, the USCBN did not enter the partnership with a definitive plan of action. Alex explained their approach to fundraising:

So, most of it is partnering with the KCN or with KSN and having them tell us you know what programs they are interested in doing or what they want to fund and then trying to work out projects... so you know, for the KCN, umm Sister Laura wanted programing to help with their home based care program which is delivering food and anti-retroviral medication to people in Thigio living with HIV. They wanted funding for that program so we were able to go to the AIDs Foundation of Chicago, write a grant application and get that program funded...

As described by Alex, the KCN developed their own programing ideas; then, the USCBN assisted the USCBN by writing grants on their behalf to fund their programs. Similarly, the KSN also developed their own initiatives and the USCBN worked to provide funding. Paul explained the USCBN's importance in grant assistance, "You know, at the end of the day, we stick together, we stick together with USCBN and we end up being very relevant because the contacts

in the US is different from what we have down here.” Paul was referencing the necessity of a US-based organization to receiving US grant funds. Alex explained:

Whenever a grant opportunity comes up, sometimes they need to have a US entity attached to it, so for like the AIDS Foundation of Chicago whenever we write grants for KCN for them, like they can't do that on their own because the grant has to go through a US NGO, so there's another couple other foundations that are like that where you have to have an entity incorporated in the US... so whenever that's the case we'll partner with them and you know, let them use our legal status to try to get them funding...

The KCN and the KSN's partnership with the USCBN, a Western organization, provided them access to resources they would not have received on their own.

When the USCBN began partnering with the KCN and the KSN, their mission focused on preventing HIV/AIDs. As the partnerships progressed, the organization's mission expanded to elevating the health of Kenyan communities. Alex explained the trajectory of their expansion:

...it kind of branched out more than just the HIV workshops we were doing to trying to fund some of their HIV programs but also just more broadly like [Sister Laura] wanted funding for their youth sport's program or other things like that so we kinda tried to, you know when we write grants we kind of couch it still within HIV but we've been trying to just help them as an organization keep money coming in so they can do the community programs.

The USCBN expanded their mission to better serve the KCN and the KSN. Over time, the USCBN realized that the KCN and the KSN needed assistance with programs outside of the HIV/AIDs umbrella. Alex, Tara, and Lisa indicated the importance of providing holistic support to the KCN and the KSN. Alex observed, “Sometimes organization can be responsive to funding.” To circumvent this tendency, the USCBN expanding their mission to general health and wellness to find grants that coalesced with the KCN and the KSN's specific programing needs.

Along with the grant support, the USCBN also provided material and technical resources to the KCN and the KSN. As organizations, the KCN and the KSN were similar, yet different; the material and technical resources that the KCN needed were different from that of the KSN. As mentioned in the literature review, “societies are *not* postcolonial *in the same way*” (Prasad, 2003, p. 28). Community members in Thigio had somewhat of an advantage because the KCN was a Western organization operating in Kenya. Through their Western ties, the KCN had far more resources than the KSN. Through their close relationships and consistent contact, the USCBN recognized the differences between the KCN and the KSN and responded to the specific needs of both groups.

While discussing the collaborative nature of the KSN’s partnership with the USCBN, Robert said, “we have so much of condom both male and female, coming all the way from Chicago. Lots of sanitary towels that we get and different other technical, I would say assistance and support you get from the USCBN.” The KSN is a resource center for the Athi River community; they offer both condoms and sanitary towels. The KSN realized the need for sanitary towels in their community, they approached the USCBN, and the USCBN began a pad drive to supply sanitary towels to the KSN.

In the previous paragraph, Robert mentioned, “different other technical, I would say assistance and support you get from the USCBN.” The assistance and support he referred to was the organizational capacity building the USCBN offered during their visits. Before the USCBN provided technical assistance to the KSN, the KSN struggled to solidify their mission and sustain themselves financially. Referring to the technical support, Alex said, “this where a lot of Laura’s work has come in...trying to do an organizational assessment of where they are at... try to put in place you know a real, a plan for how they want to grow and what their goals are and what they

want to do be doing.” Further, Tara included, “whenever we would come [to Kenya] we would have workshops with [Robert] and with his staff about how do you write a mission... how do you start living your mission... how do you create a budget and how do you fund that budget and how do you decide what gets money and what doesn’t get money umm all of those things we worked with him on to help him build his capacity to have this organization.” Through their organizational capacity building, the USCBN provided the KSN tools to grow into a sustainable organization, without imposing their views or controlling the outcomes. The USCBN showed the KSN how to develop a mission, a budget, and a plan; then, they allowed them to drive those strategies in ways that worked for them.

The collaboration that occurred between the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN helped the organizations to better enact their initiatives and serve their communities. However, the partnership provided more than mere tangible outcomes. Paul explained the benefits the KSN received from the USCBN’s visits:

ummm.. maybe you see when you guys come, now we have you it gives the whole initiative some kind of new energy... when our audience get to see new people having different ways of presenting the same thing getting a lot of um learning is exchanged... because the way you would present for instance a topic on oral, it is not the way I would do it so at the end of the day we have a lot of um learning on the same, from different people...it really works.

Paul indicated that the USCBN’s visits provided “new energy” to their programming. During my observations, I witnessed the energy Paul referred to. When we first arrived to Athi River, the KSN members were excited to host us and show us around their community. One of the volunteers, Jessica, told me that she had looked forward to our visit for weeks and loved having us around. The collaboration that occurred between the USCBN and the KSN was not solely

material and resource based; the USCBN's visits inspired the KSN and the Athi River community.

The USCBN worked hard to ensure that their programming was elevating the wellness of Kenyan communities. While the exchanges that occurred within the partnership were mostly one-sided, as the KCN and the KSN received most of the benefits from partnership, the USCBN did benefit from their participation. The KCN and the KSN provided opportunities for the USCBN to carry out their work and pilot their programs. The USCBN is composed of American professionals, interested in promoting the health and well-being of Kenyan communities and eradicating the global HIV epidemic. The KCN and the KSN provided the USCBN access to Kenyan communities and supported them by providing perspective on local knowledge and practices. Additionally, the USCBN was able to test their program effectiveness through the help of the KSN and the KCN. Alex explained:

we finally got to a place in our own organization where we had at least enough money to send volunteers to do the program and to actually evaluate it and see how... you know, see how it works on the ground... So that's a success for us as an organization and that wouldn't have been possible if we didn't have the existing relationships with the KCN and KSN...

As a volunteer, I traveled to Kenya to conduct workshops and to test the strength of the program materials through pre-and post-workshop surveys. The KCN and the KSN coordinated the workshops and aided us in distributing the surveys to the participants at the end of the programs. Further, they provided our accommodations and acted as our liaison to the community. Without the KCN and the KSN, our work would have been far more difficult. The collaboration between the USCBN and the KSN and the KCN allowed for each organization's success and sustainability.

In sum, the mutual benefits that ensued from the collaboration between the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN were results of the relationship built on their initial alliances. The USCBN's reflexive approach to their partnerships with the KCN and the KSN mitigated against Western hegemonic tendencies to fix, manage, and control. Through their reflexivity, the USCBN was able to generate truly collaborative programming that privileged the local knowledge and expertise of the Thigio and Athi River communities. Through their collaborative initiatives, the work of the KCN, the KSN, and the USCBN flourished sustainably. Sustainability was an emergent theme from the data and the concept that will be explored next.

I nervously arrived to one of my favorite breakfast restaurants on a sweltering Sunday morning in Chicago. My fellow volunteers and I decided to meet for a casual breakfast before our two-day formal training that was set to commence immediately upon completion of breakfast. The restaurant was a stones throw from where I had originally met Alex just a few months before... As I walked to breakfast that morning, I reminisced about my first meeting with Alex; I could not believe that the conversation he and I had that day was becoming a reality.

I only knew one of my fellow volunteers prior to breakfast that morning, the conversation effortlessly flowed as the five of us slowly introduced ourselves to one another. After breakfast, we all walked to a classroom on the Catholic University campus where our two-day training was hosted. Upon entering the classroom, I felt relieved and excited to see Alex's smiling face. This trip was actually happening.

After we discussed logistical agenda items, Alex, Lisa, and Alexia began to train us on the HWCP manual. The training started with the first section of the HWCP, the "health shield". Garrett adapted the shield from the Kenyan flag to represent the four components of the HWCP

program: emotional, spiritual, social, and physical health. I was intrigued by the shield; but, did not give it much thought while we were in Chicago, as I was preoccupied with learning the technical health knowledge required of us as workshop facilitators.

Fast forward to Thigio and I was just as nervous for the first day of our workshops as I was to meet the other volunteers on that steamy Chicago morning just a few days earlier. I had previously worked with students similar in age to the participants we had in Thigio. I could not believe how quiet and well-behaved they were as they waited for the workshop to start. As Tara and I began our lecture, it was amazing to see their disengaged faces soften as we presented them with the health shield; the shield from their flag. I can remember standing in front of the large, colorful room thinking, “wow, a group of Chicagoans really made a Kenyan program...”

Creating Local Sustainability

The USCBN relationships with the KCN and the KSN did not begin with intentions of a long-term partnership. Nonetheless, as their alliances with the two organizations morphed into relationships, their collaborative work produced sustainable partnerships. The aforementioned themes, alliance, relationship, and collaboration were the impetus for the fourth theme that emerged from the data, sustainability. Within the data, sustainability manifested twofold; the USCBN produced a sustainable program through their collaborative development of the HWCP and the USCBN enabled the KCN and the KSN to be sustainable organizations through capacity building. The following analysis begins with an examination of the HWCP. Through their collaboration with the KCN and the KSN, the HWCP became a Kenyan program. The KCN and the KSN were trained to facilitate the program and they learned to train other organizational members as facilitators, too. Further, the HWCP positively affected the Thigio and Athi River

communities. After I investigate the HWCP, I will conclude with an analysis of the capacity building work of the USCBN and how that work fostered organizational sustainability for the KCN and the KSN. Through their work with the USCBN, the KCN and the KSN were able to sustainably grow and better serve their communities.

The HWCP is the main program the USCBN developed with the KCN and the KSN. The material from the HWCP originated from USCBN's work with the KEC. Overtime, the USCBN formalized the material to create the HWCP. As mentioned in the narrative at the beginning of this section and the collaboration portion of the analysis, the USCBN worked with the KCN and the KSN to integrate the HWCP to reflect Kenyan knowledge and practices. Robert explained,

HWCP is is local, it's all Kenyan because if you look at some of the pages where they talk about the shield, which is imbued in our Kenyan flag you start appreciating and wanting to associate it with, even the kids want to associate at first glance because ahh this is our flag... you know and this our shield and all that sooo there is a lot of creativity... and lots of um uh umm i think research done umm for in developing the HWCP, the very fact that you have something like the Kenyan flag in the very initial pages of it means a lot to the people using it and to those that are trained on it.

I observed Robert's sentiments in the Thigio and Athi River workshops. The participants were dubiously reserved at the onset of the workshops. The workshop began with the "health shield"; the participants became visibly relaxed once they saw the shield from their flag in the workshop. In the collaboration section, I quoted Lisa mentioning the "health shield". Lisa believed the incorporation of the shield promoted the cultural sensitivity of the program materials. In addition to being cultural sensitive, the shield from the Kenyan flag fostered the material's sustainability.

Since the USCBN creatively worked to design the HWCP materials for Kenyan audiences, the KCN and the KSN members were able to efficiently deliver the program to their communities without having to make too many localized adaptations. Melissa was reticent during our interview. Yet, while discussing the HWCP manual, Melissa did say, "it's good for

Kenyan... Ya... I have not seen any difficulties in it... Mmm without the manual, I don't think we could do much." Melissa's support for the HWCP manual, in spite of her reserved approach to our conversation, promoted my belief in the sustainability of the program materials.

The HWCP's long-term sustainability derived from the USCBN's initiative to train the KCN and the KSN on the HWCP materials. Furthermore, the USCBN provided the KCN and the KSN with program materials. Alex said, "we would do the workshop then give them the resources...that way they will have it with them and they can do the workshops whenever they want." By empowering the KCN and the KSN with training and materials, the KCN and the KSN began training facilitators independently. Robert said,

seeing where we are at with the HWCP, we've been able to have young people and ourselves train on it and now using it as facilitators to train other young people... um there has been major milestones from one just being trained on it and how to use it two now going out and training other young people on it...

Through the USCBN's initial training, the KSN has been able to build the sustainability of the HWCP by training other facilitators. Scott spoke similarly, "out of the materials [Garrett] left behind, [we] are able to, able to visit the community and to conduct (indiscernible) workshops...because [we] got the materials, [we] are available, and will bring an impact...."

Scott explained that with the training and the supplemental materials, the KCN was able to "bring an impact" to the community using the HWCP. Sister Elizabeth and Sister Colleen had powerful examples in support of Scott's statement. Sister Elizabeth said,

I would say I haven't come across, they have been coming since 2004, so that's 8 years...I have never seen a teen-aged sick with AIDs...I think if the teenagers are trained and know all about AIDs and how it is communicated and how it is spread from one

another which [the USCBN] did a very good program, an excellent program...and I think it has been a prevention program I'd say...

Even though the USCBN does not have quantifiable data to support Sister Elizabeth's statement, both she and Sister Colleen reported a lower HIV/AIDS incidence rate amongst Thigio's teen-aged population since the HWCP was introduced in their community in 2004. Sister Colleen discussed another positive outcome of the HWCP; the USCBN de-stigmatized HIV/AIDS testing for youth in Thigio. Referring to HIV/AIDS testing, she said, "because that's not something you want to do...because why would you go for testing and everyone watching you saying I know your behavior is such that necessitating you going to that building...so anyhow they've been able to break down that barrier..."

Sister Colleen described an additional element of sustainability inherent in the HWCP, program certification. The Thigio community did not have access to supplementary educational training and workshops prior to USCBN's programming. Sister Colleen explained the importance of these programs to Thigio community members; she said, "my librarian went on to a teaching job, I had 21 applicants... And among their papers that they gave me, where their certifications of whatever workshop that they went to..." Community members valued their participation at the workshops; they listed it as experience on their resumes and job applications. Since the level of opportunity for advancement is limited in Thigio, the HWCP workshops were some of the only opportunities they had to grow and learn. The HWCP's impact progressed sustainably after the program completion; participants continued to value their certificates and used them to secure their livelihoods.

The HWCP's sustainability was a result of the localized knowledge instilled in the program and the KCN and the KSN's ability to independently facilitate and train others on the

materials. The USCBN also aided in the holistic sustainability of both organizations. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, the KCN and the KSN operated differently and had access to disparate resources. The KCN was a Western backed organization; the Sisters operated independently before the USCBN began working with them. Sister Elizabeth explained the USCBN's involvement as, "I would just, I am very grateful to [the Catholic University group] for what they have done for uh this area and they have helped us as Kenyan Catholic Nonprofit and also the youth in the area and I think they have done a lot of prevention work." The KCN had the organizational capacity to independently facilitate the HWCP. Comparatively, prior to working with the USCBN, the KSN would not have had the capacity to independently implement workshops. Therefore, the USCBN spent a great deal of time developing the organizational capacity of the KSN.

When the members of the USCBN first met Robert and Paul, neither group had registered as nonprofit organizations. Yet, as both organizations solidified as nonprofits, it was the USCBN that had the technical knowledge and material resources to naturally develop into a formidable organization upon the substantiation of their registration. Even though both organizations formalized at the same time, the USCBN was equipped with far more resources and took on the role of the capacity builder in the partnership. The KSN struggled without the help of the USCBN, Tara explained:

umm just that they were a struggling organization and the beginning then we were able to talk to them, find out what they needed, what some of their strengths were, what their weaknesses were and we were able to help them improve upon those strengths and improve upon those weaknesses so that way they could eventually be a sustainable organization

Robert and Paul were aware of the struggles Tara mentioned. As organizational leaders they did not have to requisite skills necessary for running and growing a nonprofit on a limited budget. However, through the USCBN's capacity building initiatives, the KSN grew into a sustainable organization. Tara said, "the KSN will continue whether or not the USCBN is partnering with them or not...they're at a point where really they can live on their own." Tara believed in the KSN's sustainability; she saw them capable of continuing their work with or without the help of the USCBN.

Alex attributed KSN's sustainability to the organizational capacity building exercises Laura enacted with the KSN. Alex said, "Laura's done a lot of work with just kind of building an organization structure, you know, how do you see yourself, how do you organize your volunteers or your staff...umm what is your vision, your mission, uhh how do you do you know, your day-to-day operations..." Laura's workshop provided tools to the KSN; the KSN learned practices that guided their day-to-day decision making. The KSN worked with the USCBN to develop a mission statement and a vision for their work. During my visits to the KSN headquarters, I observed their mission and vision proudly displayed in each room.

Robert and Paul readily spoke of the USCBN's capacity building efforts that promoted the establishment and sustainability of their organization. Paul said,

I would say to a great large extent, the USCBN has really taken KSN from far... this I mean that when we were starting, we... All this infrastructure was not in place... What we had was just simply a file... and then we operated with that file, imagine a sort of briefcase type of operation for some time... until the USCBN came on board and they realized the need... because when we sold the idea to them, truly they were convinced that this the need and it works.. So they come in and they provided us with what was required to put the infrastructure in 2008 place... So the relationship to us and been so, so

(pauses) how can I put it, so useful to us... say if it was not for them, maybe it would have taken us longer for us to even stand on our own feet...

I asked Paul, “Ok, so they kind of accelerated your growth?” and he said, “Yes... yes. They really assisted us in taking off...” As Paul described, before Laura provided training to establish the KSN’s infrastructure, the KSN was a “briefcase operation”. The KSN found the USCBN’s support “useful” and were able to grow from the support they provided.

Robert had his own description of the USCBN’s capacity building efforts. The USCBN assisted the KSN with their budget and raising money. Robert explained,

And us being able to move into sustainability from the initial stages where we didn’t have monies and things like this to take care of our own bills to a point where we can sustain ourselves... So uh, to me that is a major success....

By building a platform for financial sustainability, with the help of the USCBN, the KSN was able to develop sustainably in other areas of their organization. Robert spoke optimistically about the future success of the KSN, he said, “from the very initial stages of just meetingto now having an institution that doesn’t rely so much on me for its survival.” I asked him, “so you would say that today if you were to go away from the KSN that it could keep running on its own?” He replied, “ Yeah, yeah...now I think we have enough systems in place and enough people that could fit into my shoes and just run with it, maybe even to greater heights...” Robert believed the KSN was sustainable with him or without him.

Alex recognized the growth of the KSN. He was able to see marked difference in their organizational capacities. Alex said,

I think that seeing the KSN being their own autonomous entity... the last couple of trips I’ve gone out to Athi River, their just telling us everything they’ve been doing... Laura and I were there in March and we had just seen that their, you know they have all these

income generating projects now their making jewelry and pottery and ya they're making all these things and selling it and bringing money back into the organization... They have a community garden that the youth can come and work in... You know, they have their center all set up... They've gotten other grants that we haven't even helped them write... And so I feel, I I umm I kind of feel like we helped them in a transitional period and now their, they really are their own organization... And we're still partnering with them we're still helping them but they are no longer, they don't really need us...

Alex appeared genuinely happy while he was discussing the successes of the KSN. The USCBN's partnership with the KSN emerged from a friendship with the organization's members and grew to a sustainable partnership. Alex's jovial tone revealed the relational aspects of their involvement with the KSN. The USCBN's motives for the partnership were of authentic origins; they believed in their work and they wanted to help them do that work better.

Tara's beliefs in the capacity of the KSN were similar to Alex's. Tara referred to the USCBN's relationship with the KSN as a "model partnership"; she said, our relationship [with the KSN] has evolved and now we're kind of reversed as in we are learning from them and going to them for help on feedback and how we can be better as an organization, so I think the KSN is our ideal relationship and how we kind of model some of our other partnerships that we are starting off on because it works so well...

The USCBN's partnership with the KSN transitioned from the USCBN solely aiding and supporting the KSN to the KSN equally supporting and sustaining the USCBN.

The mutual sustainability of the USCBN's partnerships with the KCN and the KSN ensured their long-term successes. As previously mentioned in Chapter Two, it has become increasingly difficult for nonprofits to achieve individual success and long-term sustainability

independently (Heath, 2007; Isbell, 2012). The collaborative nature of the USCBN's, the KCN's, and the KSN's work allowed them to collectively develop the sustainability of each organization, a feat that would have been difficult without the support of the partnership (Heath, 2007; Dempsey, 2009; Isbell, 2012). Through collaboratively developing the HWCP, the program emerged as local document and remained sustainable through the training the USCBN provided to the KCN and the KSN. Local, grassroots programs are best at facilitating positive change within communities (Heath, 2007; Dempsey, 2009; Norander & Harter, 2011; Isbell, 2012). In addition to the programming training, the USCBN provided organizational trainings, which allowed for the KCN and the KSN to grow as independent organizations, both financially and systematically. Therefore, through the USCBN's "hands-off", supportive approach, the KCN and the KSN were able to use the resources provided to them to develop their organizations into the visions they had for themselves; rendering lasting results and long-term growth.

As I sat beneath a mosquito net on my small sturdy bed in Athi River, I began to question the responses I had received from the interviews I had conducted during my visit. While I was in Thigio, I interviewed Sister Elizabeth, Sister Colleen, and Scott. Upon my arrival to Athi River, Robert was my first interview. Sister Elizabeth, Sister Colleen, Scott, and Robert had nearly identical responses. They all spoke positively about the USCBN and retold similar stories of their prior visits. I wondered if the participants were fearful to share negative information with me or if the USCBN really had positively collaborative relationships with the KCN and the KSN. What if they weren't telling the whole truth?

The next day, I walked down a dusty gravel road to the KSN headquarters. Paul and I had scheduled our interview for what became a relatively relaxed morning. Prior to our

interview, Paul and I had limited interactions. It was Robert who greeted us when we arrived to Athi River and dined with us on the first evening we arrived. Further, Robert arranged our stay and coordinated the logistics of our visit. Paul had been around, but I had not had much of an opportunity to speak with him.

Since Paul and I did not have a chance to get to know each other before our interview, I was not sure what to expect when I sat down in his small office space. Immediately, Paul's vibrant energy sparked my tired body, he made me feel at ease and I was excited for our interview. After a brief moment of small talk, I slowly began asking him the same questions I had asked the other four interviewees. To my surprise, Paul's responses were dynamically different from Sister Elizabeth, Sister Colleen, Scott, and Robert's. I could not believe my ears; Paul was negatively evaluating the USCBN's efforts. Paul did have some positive things to say, but a majority of his responses reflected a disjointed partnership. My conversation with Paul did not weaken the responses of my previous interviewees; yet, he introduced disparate data for me to consider as I left his office.

Partnership Tensions

Paul's interview was a turning point in my thesis research, as it clearly demonstrated the tensions inherent within the USCBN's partnerships. However, his critical appraisal of the USCBN's work inadvertently offered support to my overall findings: the alliance between the USCBN members and members of the KCN and the KSN produced a relationship that fostered a collaborative partnership which resulted in sustainable work. As I had previously outlined, Robert acted as the main contact between the KSN and the USCBN, and he was solely responsible for the alliance that emerged between KSN and the early members of the USCBN.

Therefore, Paul was not an active part of the initial alliance that solidified the relationship between the organizations. Similarly, Melissa was also absent during the formation of KSN's alliance with the USCBN members. Melissa's interview responses were vague; yet, she did passively degrade some of the USCBN's work. Since Paul and Melissa did not participate in the original alliance, they did not have an opportunity to form a foundational relationship with the USCBN.

Outwardly, it seemed as if there was solidarity between organizational members; yet, Paul and Melissa's experiences were different from the others. While a majority of my observations and interview responses were extremely favorable towards the USCBN, some of the data portrayed the partnership in a negative light. These differences resulted in hidden tensions; tensions are similar to Tsing's (2005) notion of frictions. As presented in the literature review, frictions are "co-produced" through cultural interactions and result in "the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference" (Tsing, 2005, p. 4). This section will explore different, and sometimes marginalized, experiences expressed by several members of each contributing partner group including cultural and social conflicts of identity, varying expectations and understandings of the partnership outcomes, concerns regarding voice and participation. Lastly the analysis will conclude with intercultural differences that produced the KSN's faulty perceptions of the USCBN.

Cultural and Social Identity Conflicts

Many of the relational oppositions resulted from organizational members' lack of participation in the original alliances. Sister Colleen, Paul, and Melissa were not actively a part of the initial alliance that the USCBN formed with the KCN and the KSN. Comparable to Melissa, Sister Colleen joined the KCN after the alliance between the USCBN and the KCN had

formed. However, Sister Colleen had only positive things to say about the USCBN and their work in Thigio. The divergence between Paul and Melissa and Sister Colleen's experiences can be explained by Sister Colleen's identity as a white-Westerner and the foundations of the KCN's alliance with the USCBN. Sister Colleen lived in Chicago before living in Thigio; therefore, Sister Colleen and the USCBN members experienced connection through their shared identities as Americans who have lived in Chicago. These similarities provided a platform for Sister Colleen to bond with the USCBN members and establish a relationship. Diversely, outside of the partnership, Paul and Melissa did not have a connection to the members of the USCBN. Further, the KCN's alliance with the USCBN was a direct result of the USCBN's Catholic affiliation. Sister Elizabeth, Sister Colleen, and Scott all referred to the USCBN as the "Catholic University Group" during their interviews and in day-to-day interactions. Even though the USCBN was a secular organization, they still had ties to a Catholic institution through their membership to the Catholic University - this link facilitated Sister Colleen's connection to the USCBN.

Similar to Sister Colleen, most of the Sisters were White-Western women. Unlike the members of the KCN, the shared identities of the KCN and the USCBN helped cultivate strong relationships. Yet, the KCN's Catholic affiliation adversely affected some relational interactions between group members. For example, Alex is gay; Alex felt his sexual identity produced tensions that limited his ability to genuinely connect with members of the KCN. Alex said,

just being gay and not being out to them I think it's maybe a personal challenge for me... because we do bond and when we go there we talk about our friends and family back home and Laura shows pictures of her kids and you know, we become friends with these people... But because they are a faith based organization and I don't want to jeopardize any of the professional relationships we have with them, you know I and Garrett kind of

keep the certain things about ourselves. We are friends with them... but we kind of have to be like Catholic versions of ourselves...

The Sisters' religious beliefs inhibited the depth of a true personal relationship with Alex. Even though it is illegal to be gay in Kenya; Alex believed that his inability to express his sexual identity was a direct result of Catholic beliefs, not national law. Alex explained,

Ya it's a Catholic thing, because with KSN, I mean, Paul and Robert came to Chicago and umm we were pretty... We never explicitly had a conversation with them about being gay but they have to know... We tried, I helped them write a grant to AMFAR to do...programming for men who have sex with men and they were interested in starting an LGBT component of their programs and like so, you know... I think it's more of the faith based thing than it is the Kenya culture thing... Because if it was Kenyan culture we wouldn't do it with KSN...

Alex was able to be himself with KSN members because the KSN did not abide by the Catholic beliefs' that influenced Kenyan law.

Though the sources of the conflicts were different, the USCBN faced relational tensions with both the KCN and the KSN that hindered collaborative work. The USCBN created alliances and relationships with the *leaders* of the KCN and the KSN; yet, they struggled to develop strong connections with the organizational staff members. Their inability to create genuine relationships with the staff members of the KCN and the KSN contradicted their desire to be a collaborative partner and prevented avenues for growth. For example, Melissa was responsible for implementing the HWCP on the ground; but she had a weak relationship with members of the USCBN. I asked Melissa, "[what can you tell me] about the partnership between the USCBN and the KSN?" Melissa responded, "Not really much. What I know is that the USCBN and the KSN are partnering. But no details. No idea."

Sanctioned Voice and Participation

Melissa's weak relationship with members of the USCBN limited her voice opportunity; thus, constricting collaboration and opportunities for the USCBN to improve their programming (Avery & Quinones, 2002). Since Melissa did not have an opportunity to evaluate Tara and my deliverance of the HWCP materials, she implicitly criticized our workshop performance during our interview. Tara and I did not consistently deliver the HWCP workshops; so, we frequently had to read from the workshop manual. While we were discussing the HWCP during our interview, Melissa said,

cause for me I'm conversant with the HWCP, I can do, if it's VCT, do VCT from the start to the end...the manual is there to help us...support the time of facilitation. But what we do, you have to read the manual, be conversant with it so that when you are training you don't have to go, like you are holding the manual right here, you should be conversant with what is in there, in the manual...

While I delivered the workshop, I held the manual for a majority of my facilitation time. Instead of providing us feedback for growth; Melissa's comments were an indirect criticism of our facilitation abilities. Melissa did not have a relationship with the USCBN, so she did not operate from a relational power base and was not motivated to address her tensions with our performance for the betterment of the programming. Her comment also demonstrates her a possible frustration with not having been asked to deliver the workshop. This contradicts the earlier notion of sustainability, as KSN does have the capacity to deliver the workshops. USCBN did not take advantage of them as a resource, and instead, came in to deliver the workshops as though USCBN was the primary experts in the material.

Similarly, in spite of Scott's long-term relationship with the USCBN, he did not feel as if he could speak out against the USCBN's work. When I asked Scott to describe his interactions with the USCBN, he said,

Personally, I've never, (stammers) personally I rely, I rely on Sisters... Cuz as a staff, ya... In case I need anything, I just call on Sisters, the Sisters are the ones that are contacting, because there is never immediate (indiscernible)...

Scott referred to himself as "staff" and drew hierarchal boundaries between him and the USCBN members; he did not see himself as an equal player in the partnership.

I asked Scott, "if you ever had a problem with something, do you feel that you could openly tell them?"; he said,

well....unless, if I, if umm.. if umm... (pauses) If I am allowed to do it. Ok, ok, ok.... if given a chance, maybe I could do it, but see I am a person, a staff person. a not able to talk to ok to (indiscernible)... but you see if there is a chance, if it has no problem to do it... maybe I can tell him or her...

Then I asked, "would you feel comfortable giving them suggestions?". He replied ,

Ya, I can, I can if they are comfortable to receive it, I am comfortable to give it out... (indiscernible) it depends on the person who is to receive the information... the way he would handle it or how he would handle it... but, I can do it...

Scott felt as if he could share feedback with the USCBN; however, he did not have an opportunity to express his concerns. My conversations with Scott and Melissa revealed the gaps within the USCBN's involvement with the KSN and the KCN. The USCBN had solid relationships with the Sisters and Robert; yet, those collaborative relationships did not trickle down to the organizational members responsible for executing the program.

Translation and Communication

A primary argument for sustainability and local facilitation of the material is the challenge of translation. Though English is a primary language in Kenya, the Kenyan accent is quite distinct from the U.S. accent. We struggled to effectively communicate with workshop participants. During lectures, we frequently received quizzically stares; it was unclear if the participants did not understand our pronunciation or the words we were using to convey our messages. Sister Colleen noted this difficulty during our interview. She said,

Umm I don't know from my point of view, but from your point of view it must be a challenge to umm make sure that people who are hearing you understand... Most people have a knowledge of English but they may not have a knowledge of the vocabulary that you are using... there is a lot of words that you use in your AIDS education that are not their regular everyday vocabulary.

Communication across cultures is very challenging. Even in my interviews, speaking with Scott and Melissa was often frustrating, I genuinely wanted their input; but I did not want to cause embarrassment to them or myself by continuously asking them to repeat their statements. Furthermore, the workshop participants were suspicious of the USCBN team and there were limited interactions between the participants and the facilitators during the workshops. It was evident they could not always understand what we were saying; yet, they did not feel comfortable asking us to clarify our statements.

Communicating with locals on the ground presented unique challenges to my work and the work of the USCBN while we were Kenya. Along with the communication misunderstandings highlighted above, interview responses indicated more general, logistical international communication issues. Tensions mounted as the USCBN attempted to coordinate

large, unrelated projects with the KCN and the KSN with limited resources. The cultural differences and geographical boundaries between the organizations prevented unobstructed communication from occurring. Tara mentioned some of these disturbances during her interview.

She said,

I think there is always going to be a communication issue, I think it's just cultural, it's language, time zone difference, but I do think there are ways we can make it better... I don't think we do any skyping right now with them, that might be something we can do... umm I don't know how much we talk on the phone with them, it's mostly through email and I think when you talk through email with anybody, and especially cross culture, messages get mixed and misinterpreted but it's important to be very clear so we try to, as much as we can...

Tara believed that the communication issues were largely due to the platforms used to communicate. Aside from the three trips they take each year, the USCBN mainly communicates with the KCN and the KSN through email. However, Tara felt that it was more efficient to communicate with their partners on the ground. She explained,

I think it is easier on the ground to get things done, more so because the way the Kenyan culture works and not necessarily the American culture...I feel like a lot of the things we do in person could be done in American over an email, it could be done in other ways, but because of that language barrier and not being able to ask any questions and clarifying, being in person helps makes that more effective, I think they work better with that type of style and they are just extremely laid back here, you know taking tea and all of those things we don't do in the United States because we are very hustle gotta get everything done... gotta make every second productive of my day... umm so I feel like when you are in person with them you can really communicate better and get some of those messages across umm especially even reading the body language cause you can see umm if they are confused, whereas if you send an email saying, you know I need this table filled out so I can help submit this grant with you all, if you can give me this information. They say ok, I'll do it and get it to you a week later and it's completely the

opposite of what you thought you asked for, so working with umm together in person uh you can kind of read some of that and clarify which you cannot do over email... As Tara described, the Kenyan culture is opposite from American culture, Kenyan culture is very laid back. Dissimilar to Americans, Kenyans do not operate under the same high levels of urgency and directness.

For example, before we arrived in Kenya, Alex organized our workshop schedules with the KCN and the KSN. We were under the impression that the workshop details had been arranged and we had prepared our lesson plans based on the guidelines Alex provided. However, the Sisters changed the length of workshop the day they were scheduled to begin and informally notified us of these changes. We struggled to accommodate the last-minute changes provided by the Sisters; we had planned for a longer session and were required to forgo material to finish within the allotted time. As evidenced by this example, when the USCBN attempts to plan and collaborate over email, solidifying details can be troublesome. Even though the USCBN was aware of the cultural differences that prevented the effectiveness of their work, it did not mitigate the impact of the disturbances on their collaborative efforts.

Competing Expectation of Partnership Activities

Apart from the intercultural communication issues that prohibited open collaboration within the USCBN's partnerships with the KCN and the KSN, other misconceptions produced tensions for some organizational members. In the opening narrative of this section, I described my interview with Paul and his unfavorable description of the USCBN's relationship with the KSN. Paul did not have the same relationship with the USCBN as Robert did. Robert was the direct contact between the KSN and the USCBN. Paul's limited interaction prevented him from developing friendships with the USCBN members. Just as Scott and Melissa struggled to connect with the USCBN, sociohistorical and economic differences inhibited a natural relationship from

forming between Paul and USCBN members - these issues will be further addressed at the end of this section. Unlike Robert, Paul was removed from the USCBN and it was evident during our conversation. While speaking about the USCBN, Paul said,

several years down the line, we should have the USCBN/KSN relationship so vibrant. instead of just having Lexus, and Garret and Lisa and Alex coming 3 times a year, we need to get more people on board from that other side from the US side getting more people engaged... [We need] more frequent visits by different people...

As Paul criticized the lack of growth in the USCBN/KSN relationship, he mistakenly called Laura, Lexus and expressed his desire for the USCBN to send other members to Athi River. Diverging from Robert, Sister Elizabeth, Sister Colleen, and Scott, Paul was not enamored with the USCBN members; he wanted new volunteers to come and had no attachment to the original USCBN members.

Even though Paul did not have a strong connection with the USCBN members, he did seem grateful for the USCBN's support. Nevertheless, he scrutinized their effort and approach to the partnership. Paul said,

Ummm, obviously life, you have strengthens and limitations, you know? When it comes to partnering and the sort... At the end of the day, I would say that the relationship between Y4L and Rafiki would not really be called perfect.

Throughout the duration of the interview, Paul mainly spoke about the "imperfect" aspects of KSN's relationship with the USCBN. In short, Paul did not believe the USCBN was providing an adequate level of support and guidance to the KSN. Paul said,

My stress is if we can have some more energy put into it... you know? I think they have the capacity that is needed really to take a small organization like KSN to the next level...

because when you look at their profiles, umm for guys working the USCBN, their profiles are so good, you know? These are people who really when they sit down and say ok now KSN after supporting them to initiate, where are they today? You know? Taking, auditing KSN saying, we took them from 0 today they are 5, let's see where they are next? When, how long will it take us to get them to 10?

I believe Paul saw the relationship between the USCBN and the KSN as imperfect because of the USCBN's approach to the partnership. Alex and Lisa both identically said the USCBN was attempting to "work themselves out of a job." As a nonprofit with a mission of capacity building, the USCBN aimed to build the capacity of their partners to a level that the organizations could be sustainable on their own; thus, "working themselves out of a job". It seemed as if Paul wanted the USCBN to continue to provide the same level of support they did when they first began working with KSN, while it was in its infancy stages. The differences in their approach to organizing caused Paul great frustration.

As the efforts of the USCBN did not satisfy Paul, he actively envisioned his ideal partnership with the USCBN. He said,

[The USCBN is] coming next month, I don't think we have an agenda with them, there isn't an agenda in place... if [we] had an agenda, [they could say] "Hi guys, now we are thinking of coming to, to to what, to give you inputs on say monitoring and evaluation"....that is key.... you cannot exist as an organization without M&E of course that calls for for funding, but then at the end of the day [they] say "Hey guys, if you need inputs on that"....I'm sure even when you check on the USCBN profiles, you realize there is someone you can contact, some sessions here on monitoring and evaluation. you can have someone there who can, you realize that can be a milestone at the end of the day... you can say ah let's see, last March when we came here we had issues to do with maybe governance, you know checking the governance, and this time around we are coming to do M&E, how do you monitor and evaluate your programs and projects, you know? And

then you see now at the end of the day, slowly by slowly, the organization is becoming strong and strong and strong, you know?

Paul became very passionate as we discussed monitoring and evaluation; his inflection grew louder and his pace quickened. Paul was responsible for monitoring and evaluating KSN programing and it appeared that he felt he did not pose the necessary skills and qualifications to efficiently conduct a thorough evaluation of their programing. However, since he did not have direct contact with the USCBN members, he could not readily express his need for assistances to them.

Since Paul lacked a voice opportunity to discuss monitoring and evaluation with the KSN, Paul appeared to resent the USCBN for what he perceived as a lack of effort. The following statement also revealed the breakdown between Paul and Robert's relationship, Paul said,

for instance the contact person in the USCBN, Alex, Alex would say Hey Robert, what do you think we can do with the staff this time around? And, then maybe Robert says, umm monitoring and evaluation.

It was evident that Paul desired to receive the USCBN's help with M&E. He imaginatively described a conversation between Robert and Alex; yet, Robert did not express Paul's need for support to the USCBN team. I believe Robert did not reach out to the USCBN for assistance because he disagreed with Paul's desire for increased support. Robert appreciated the USCBN's continued assistance, but he wanted the KSN to be an independently sustainable organization and he was proud of the organization's autonomy. The discrepancy between Paul and Robert's viewpoint proved problematic for Paul's holistic well-being. And, his responses indicated that though initial relationships are strong, and an indicator of positive collaborative outcomes, they also become a filter and possible barrier to developing future relationships. Robert was the

primary contact with USCBN and so Paul is not able to voice his own concerns and desires as readily to the team.

Even though Paul and Robert did not agree on the USCBN's level of involvement, they did share some ideals. Robert did not want increased assistance from the USCBN; but, similar to Paul, Robert did want the USCBN and their volunteers to visit Kenya more frequently. Further, Paul and Robert had similar thoughts on the USCBN financial capabilities. While we were discussing monitoring and evaluation, Paul said,

among them, one of them would be in a position to do [assist us with monitoring and evaluation], I'm sure they can solve from someone, a volunteer from among their networks, they could say, "Hey guys we are going to Kenya, this organization that we assisted, would you mind to come and do some M&E? I'm sure something will be done... you know?"

Paul believed that the USCBN could effortlessly find a "volunteer from among their networks" to pay to travel to Kenya to assist the KSN with their monitoring and evaluation needs. Robert also believed it was affordable for the USCBN to frequently travel to Kenya. When I traveled to Kenya with the USCBN, it was the first time the USCBN brought outside volunteers who were not members of their board. Further, I had to pay most of my way there. While we were discussing our visit, Robert said,

I'm so amazed with having new people coming and stay here for a week and do trainings in Athi River umm I think looking forward, I wouldn't mind having volunteers coming and staying even for two months in Athi River and do trainings uh maybe reach out to more schools.

Since members of the USCBN were volunteers, they all had full-time careers and personal lives outside of their roles with the USCBN. Also, the USCBN operated on a low-budget. Therefore, staying in Kenya longer than their usual two-week durations would be difficult for USCBN

members. Consequently, Paul's desire for different visitors and Robert's wish for longer stays produced tensions within the partnership.

Alex was aware of the tensions that resulted from Robert and Paul's desire for more frequent trips by the USCBN; yet, the aforementioned restrictions inhibited the USCBN from fulfilling their desires. Even though Robert and Paul knew that the USCBN was a volunteer-driven organization, their perspective of the organization's capabilities was skewed. Alex explained,

Because you're like...friends and we want to support the organization but...I think there's a conception that we're Americans and we have all this money...

The economic disparities between the KSN and the USCBN are a material reality. Members of the USCBN are afforded many privileges members of the KSN could never dream of enjoying. Paul and Robert had previously traveled to Chicago and understood the divergence between their lives and the lives of the USCBN members. Nevertheless, the USCBN did not have the resources to travel to Kenya more frequently than they already were. It was obvious that the USCBN wanted to help the KSN and the KCN in any way they could, but their work was limited by their lack of time and financial resources.

The organizational tensions were minimal in comparison to the larger body of positive data; the powerful effects of the alliance and relationship the organizations built led to collaborative work that resulted in sustainable programs and initiatives. Nonetheless, the tensions were vital to the overall findings of my thesis research. As stated, Paul's and Melissa's unfavorable attitude towards some of the USCBN's practices was indicative of their lack of relationships with the organizations members. Further, Scott spoke favorably of the group, but he did not identify as a key player in the collaboration. Since the USCBN did not create a direct relationship with members outside of the KCN and the KSN leaders, they limited some

members' participation in the collaboration. Paul was directly affected by his lack of involvement; he felt as if the USCBN was under-serving the KSN. Further, there were geographic, cultural, and sociohistorical elements that inhibited the efficiency of their partnerships. Members of the USCBN were aware of some of these tensions; yet, the organizations' respective differences perpetuated their partnerships' existence. The final chapter, Conclusion: Implications and Directions for Future Research, will address the tensions and suggests possible methods for minimizing their negative impacts.

The analysis of the four emergent themes and partnership tensions supports the argument I offered in the Introduction Chapter - organic alliances create powerful relationships that manifest collaborative partnerships and sustainable work. At the same time, if too dominant, the founding relationships may inhibit voice and participation from newer members. Also, as long as the contributing parties find they are aligned relationally in some way, they can overcome vast differences (both spoken and unspoken) in cultural and social values and identities. The first section outlined the origin of the organizational relationships. Members of the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN organically met through their mutual Catholic affiliations. From the initial spontaneous alliances, the USCBN developed relationships with the KCN and the KSN. Section two traced the trajectory of their relationships and the important relational power dynamics it produced. Operating from a relational power base promoted trust and equality amongst organizational members and it allowed true collaboration to occur. The third section provided examples of the USCBN's collaborative work with the KCN and the KSN. Through their collaborative capacity building work, the USCBN developed the KCN and the KSN into sustainable organizations. The development of localized programing and the organizational

training provided by the USCBN allowed the KCN and the KSN to be independently sustainable. The final section outlined the tensions that arose between the organizations and their members. Even though these tensions may appear negative, previous research indicates that tensions are not wholly damaging. Tensions often propel positive organizational change (Tsing, 2005). As this knowledge is uncovered vis-a-vis this research, the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN will be able to use these findings to promote equitable change within their organizing.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Next Generation Postcolonial Research and Organizing

As introduced in Chapter One, globalization has produced organizational systems abounded with unbalanced structures and processes. The findings of this research study worked to expand the understandings of these unbalanced structures and highlight effective ways of building equanimity in our globalized system. Chapter Five begins with a summary of my research findings, highlighting the important outcomes of international capacity building, a topic relatively unexplored in the field of Communication (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007; Grimes & Parker, 2009). After presenting a succinct summary of my research findings, I will address the theoretical and practical implication that emerged from the results of the research. The Chapter will conclude with limitations and directions for future research.

Summary of Research Findings

The USCBN's connection to the KCN and the KSN serendipitously formed during the founding members' first trip to Kenya in 2005; the organizations were introduced through their mutual Catholic network. Since the USCBN members travelled to Kenya before organizing as an official nonprofit, they did not have premeditated objectives that guided their initial interactions with members of the KCN and the KSN. Consequently, their informal approach facilitated genuine connections with both organizations. Members of the USCBN are experts in the fields of Public Health and Communication and both the KCN and the KSN support their local communities by providing access to healthcare and educational resources. The founding members of the USCBN were impressed by the KCN and the KSN's initiatives and wanted to

help build the capacity of both organizations by offering their knowledge and resources. To best serve and advance the growth of the KCN and the KSN, the founding members of the USCBN organized as an official nonprofit to access outside funding and resources.

As evidenced by the literature in Chapter Two and my experience volunteering abroad in South Africa, Western organizations have the tendency to direct and control the trajectory of international interorganizational partnerships once they have been established (Lauring, 2011; Dempsey, 2007). Yet, since the founding members of the USCBN did not have an agenda during their initial interactions, they were able to build organic, equitable alliances with the KCN and the KSN. The initial alliances formed by the USCBN laid a foundation for their future work as capacity builders.

The alliances formed by the USCBN with the KCN and the KSN progressed into relationships; relationships at community, organizational, and individual levels. A relational theme was most apparent within the interview data and my participant observations. Their relationships were built on consistent visits, respect, and mutual trust. Members of each organization told stories of friendships and personal satisfaction. As Robert said, their relationship was “not always business.” Further, Sister Elizabeth, Sister Catherine, Scott, and Robert all fondly described the positive effect the USCBN had on members of their communities. The USCBN developed connections with people living in Thigio and Athi River, they were not strangers there. The genuine connections between the organizations produced a relational power dynamic and relative equality amongst organizational members. Members of the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN willingly participated in the partnerships and made sacrifices for the greater good of the groups. The USCBN’s strong relationship with the KCN and the KSN reduced the power differentials that existed between the members of each organization. The

balance of power within the relationships promoted shared decision making, which resulted in effective collaborations and sustainable programs.

The strong relationships between members of the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN laid the foundations for the organizations' collaborative partnerships. Members of the USCBN developed relationships with members of the KCN and the KSN, and these relationships guided their organizational interactions. The USCBN privileged the local knowledge and practices of the KCN and the KSN; they were careful not to interject their own beliefs and understandings. Alex perfectly described the nature of their partnership when he said, "we weren't just going off and opening a clinic or opening something...we were partnering with an organization that already had that and then helping them to do their work more." Even though the USCBN allowed the KCN and the KSN to drive the direction of their partnerships, members of the USCBN proactively responded to the needs of the KCN and the KSN by assisting them with organizational development, access to grants, and tangible supplies. Furthermore, the USCBN developed the HWCP and diligently revised the program manual to make it reflective of local Kenyan knowledge and practice.

The outcomes of the USCBN's collaborative partnership with the KCN and the KSN resulted in sustainability for all three organizations, collectively and independently. Collectively, the USCBN worked with the KCN and the KSN to revise and strengthen the HWCP and the program manual. The KCN and the KSN provided feedback on the program to the USCBN and the USCBN used the feedback to further localize the program. Members of the USCBN trained the KCN and the KSN on the program and overtime members of the KCN and the KSN trained local community members to be HWCP program facilitators, too. Therefore, the HWCP continued to flourish in the absence of the USCBN.

In addition to the HWCP, the USCBN enabled the KCN and the KSN to be independently sustainable organizations. Before the USCBN began working with the KSN, they were unable to pay their rent or carry out their programming. With the support of the USCBN, the KSN is now applying for their own grants and they are independently implementing programs. Further, the USCBN allowed the KCN to expand their reach and offerings. The USCBN's provision of financial and material resources, coupled with organizational training, enabled the KCN to reach broader audiences, and they now provide a higher level of service to the Thigio community. Through their work with the KCN and the KSN, the USCBN also developed into an independently sustainable organization. The partnerships provided the USCBN a platform to fulfill their capacity building work; improving the health and wellness of Kenyan communities, while privileging local knowledge and practices. The USCBN created a precedent for future capacity building nonprofit organizations; the outcomes of their endeavors have effectively evolved the KCN and the KSN and advanced the lives of Kenyan communities.

At the same time, it is clear that tensions surfaced within the USCBN's partnerships with the KCN and the KSN. First, cultural differences produced tensions within the partnerships; communication challenges, geographical boundaries, and divergent ways of conducting business limited organizational efficiency. Nevertheless, the strong relational ties between the founding members dominated the cultural differences that at times obstructed their work.

Along with the cultural differences, Paul and Melissa's lack of involvement in the initial alliance and relationship was reflected in their perception of the partnership. Paul saw the partnership as unequal and desired more involvement and support from the USCBN; he was unhappy with the outcomes of their organizing. Since Robert had the direct relationship with the USCBN, Paul did not have an opportunity to express his dissatisfaction. Additionally, Melissa

was an important organizational actor and she was apathetic to the USCBN and their participation in KSN programs. Similarly, Scott did not feel like an equal amongst the other participants; he expressed hesitation in voicing concern to members of the USCBN. Yet, Scott was involved in the initial alliance and had a positive view of the partnership. In spite of the strong relational ties amongst the partners, the USCBN had difficulty integrating staff members who did not participate in the higher-level organizing activities equally into the partnerships.

Inequality amongst the partners also produced tensions in the partnerships. Both Robert and Paul had travelled to the US and were hosted by the USCBN. Through that visit, they gathered a firsthand understanding of the differences inherent between their daily lives and the lives of the USCBN members. Those differences caused a faulty perception about USCBN's capacity to be involved in the partnerships. Robert and Paul both wanted the USCBN to travel to Kenya more frequently and send additional volunteers. However, the USCBN was a volunteer-driven organization and their resources were limited. Since the USCBN was a Western organization with far-greater resources than the KCN and the KSN, greater expectation was placed on their involvement. Thus, the financial inequalities amongst the partners caused tensions for their organizing.

Implications

Several theoretical and practical implications emerged as a result of the research findings summarized above. The outcomes of this study provide empirical data that both support and contest previous scholarship examining international organizing. Theoretically, this research demonstrated the "inequalities in wealth, education, and communication infrastructure" that prohibit small, local nonprofits from independently satisfying the needs of their constituencies (Dempsey, 2009, p. 328). Both the KCN and the KSN struggled to support the needs of their

communities before they partnered with the USCBN. The KCN did independently operate before partnership, but the scope of their work positively intensified at the onset of their partnership with the USCBN. Comparatively, the KSN was unable to proactively develop their organizational initiatives before partnering with the USCBN. Therefore, the research reveals “that different countries and societies are *not* postcolonial *in the same way*” (Prasad, 2003, p.28). As a society, Thigio benefited from the KCN’s Catholic affiliation and their access to Western resources. Since the KCN had access to greater resources, the community of Thigio benefitted. Divergently, the KSN did not have the same connections that the KCN was afforded, so members so Athi River were postcolonially different from the citizens of Thigio.

Additionally, the origins of the USCBN’s capacity building partnerships with the KCN and the KSN offered considerable theoretical considerations. The trajectory of the USCBN’s partnership with the KCN and the KSN supports previous research highlighting the importance of alliance building and shared interests between partners. Past research examining nonprofit partnerships revealed that previous alliances are strong predictors of future partners (Isbell, 2012; Shumate *et al.*, 2005) and the USCBN created alliances with both the KCN and the KSN before initiating partnerships. Further, past research documented the importance of shared mutual interests and histories to organizational alliances (Heath, 2007; Shumate *et al.*, 2005). The findings of this research revealed that the commonalities between the organizations led to an alliance that eventually formed into a partnership.

As presented in Chapter Two and Three, past research exhibited the tendency for US organizations to adopt a preeminent role in international partnerships (Lauring, 2011; Demspey, 2009; Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007; Shome, 1996; Prasad, 2003). Findings of this research contest these claims, as the USCBN diligently worked to promote equality within their relationships with

the KCN and the KSN. The organizing practices of the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN supported previous research inferring successful nonprofit capacity building partnerships operate interdependently and share in power and decision-making (Heath, 2007; Isbell, 2012). The interdependency inherent within the USCBN's partnerships with the KCN and the KSN propelled the collaboration that led to the organizations' sustainability.

Power and decision making within the partnership also produced important theoretical implications. The strong relationship between members of the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN allowed the participants to operate from a relational power base. As introduced by Dixon (2007), "friendships or relationships that provide partners a sense of well-being, pleasure, and personal self-actualization [manifests] a power that, as it grows in pleasure, could supersede the power of transactional, organizationally structured relationships (such as manager-subordinate) to shape organizational behavior" (p.291). Operating from a relational power-base, members willingly constrained themselves to advance the progression of the partnership (Dixon, 2007; Norander & Harter, 2011). As mentioned, Alex concealed his sexuality; the KCN allowed for the presentation of information that conflicted with the beliefs of the Catholic Church; and, Paul, Melissa, and Scott silenced their partnership concerns. As the members willingly constrained themselves to best negotiate dynamics within their relationships, they did so out love instead of fear; they wanted to be members of the partnerships and to avoid unnecessary conflict they silenced themselves to participate in the group. Thus, the outcomes of my research support power as a relational phenomenon versus the manager-subordinate framework purported in the canons of power research (Dixon, 2007).

Furthermore, past research revealed that effective partnerships work to include members of all levels in decision-making and program development (Heath, 2007; Dempsey, 2009; Isbell,

2012). While Sister Elizabeth, Sister Colleen, and Robert were active agents in driving the trajectory of the partnerships' initiatives, the USCBN failed to include staff-members and organizational volunteers in important organizational dynamics. The failure to include Paul, Melissa, and Scott in organizational decision making produced tensions within the partnerships. These tensions support past research that claimed power inequities as the leading causes of failure within nonprofit partnership (Kirby & Koschmann, 2012). Paul's, Melissa's, and Scott's lack of voice opportunity (Avery & Quinones, 2002) was the preeminent cause of most partnership tensions, as the USCBN was unaware of their issues and concerns.

The aforementioned theoretical implications offer important practical implications for practitioners engaged in international nonprofit capacity building. First, the origins of the USCBN's capacity building partnership illustrate the importance of alliance building. The founding members of the USCBN were introduced to members of the KCN and the KSN before they organized as an official nonprofit. Since the USCBN were introduced to the KCN and the KSN before organizing as an official organization, the USCBN were able to slowly build relationships with their partners and experience an uninhibited connection with organizational members and their communities. From those experiences, the USCBN established itself as an organization that responded to the local needs of the KCN and the KSN and their communities versus an organization operating with predetermined objectives based on preconceived ideas. Moreover, Paul, Melissa, and Scott's experience in the partnership provides important considerations for practitioners. While it is effective to build alliances before initiating a partnership, it is equally as important to find ways to include organizational members who were not present during the original alliance in day-to-day processes. Future practitioners engaged in

capacity building work should consider the USCBN's shortcoming to avoid alienating new members of the partnership.

As it will be difficult to replicate the organic nature of these partnerships, given the positive outcomes of this study, practitioners interested in international capacity building should consider the effectiveness of building relationships before building an organization. As mentioned, it is not uncommon for Western entities to direct and control their international partnerships with organizations from underdeveloped countries (Lauring, 2011; Dempsey, 2009; Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007; Shome, 1996; Prasad, 2003). Therefore, in order for Western practitioners to avoid the tendency to drive international partnerships, organizations should first consider creating alliances with locals to better understand what the community truly needs before attempting to interject their work. The USCBN's success as a capacity building partner is largely due to their mission that supported the efforts of their partners. As so powerfully described by Alex, "[the USCBN wasn't] just going off and opening a clinic or opening something...[they] were partnering with an organization that already had that and then helping them to do their work more". Grassroots initiatives are best at facilitating positive change within communities (Heath, 2007; Dempsey, 2009; Norander & Harter, 2011; Isbell, 2012) and the USCBN effectually partnered with the KCN and the KSN to build upon programs entrenched in local knowledge and practice. Given the outcomes of this research and prior scholarship examining postcolonial organizing (Heath, 2007; Dempsey, 2009; Norander & Harter, 2011; Isbell, 2012; Murphy, 2012), practitioners engaged in capacity building work should consider the importance of supporting local programs, instead of enacting programs of their own.

Additionally, at its core, this research implicated the importance of reflexivity to postcolonial partnerships. Equanimity is an essential component of successful nonprofit

partnerships (Heath, 2007; Isbell, 2012). Nevertheless, sociohistorical circumstances created inequalities between members of the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN. It was necessary for the USCBN to reflexively consider the differences inherent within their partnerships. Members of the KCN and the KSN and their communities are burdened by the inequitable scars of colonialism. During our interviews, each member of the USCBN acknowledged the differences inherent within the organizations. The USCBN had access to connections and resources that the KCN and KSN did not have. Therefore, the KCN and the KSN were required to introduce their needs to the USCBN. The USCBN wanted the KCN and the KSN to drive the outcomes of their organizing, so they conscientiously worked to satisfy their needs. Through reflexively understanding their identity as privileged Westerns, members of the USCBN circumvented the tendency to direct and control, which allowed the KCN and the KSN to be agents of their own sustainability. Future practitioners can refer to this method of organizing to generate sustainable capacity building nonprofit partnerships.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While I diligently planned and conducted my research, I am aware of the limitations inherent to this study. At the forefront, both time and resources constrained the scope of this research. Limited financial resources restricted the amount of time I was able to spend in Kenya observing my participants; fieldwork took place over a two-week period in July 2012. Further, time limitations prohibited inclusion of additional organizations and participants; interviews were confined to members of the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN. Future studies should expand research on capacity building nonprofits to include various organizations and conduct the studies for a longer duration of time.

There were also limitations inherent within the interview research questions. The questions were carefully crafted to privilege the voice of the participants. I asked general interview questions to allow for an organic narrative, unprompted by my words or descriptors. In an effort to enable the participants' voices to stand out, I failed to address avenues for richer insight. For example, in hindsight, I would have liked to ask the KCN how they felt about the USCBN's condom demonstrations and references to premarital sex. Also, questions like, "How are decision making and power shared amongst the organizations?", would have generated insightful data. Future postcolonial researchers should take notice of these shortcomings to avoid withholding valuable information. Asking richer questions, while still allowing the participants to direct the conversation, will provide greater context and insight to postcolonial partnerships. Additionally, the intercultural differences that restricted partnership efficiency need to be addressed. Geographic boundaries and cultural differences inhibited productivity. Examining ways to reduce the effects of these unchangeable boundaries and cultural differences will generate insights that increase the effectiveness of international organizing.

Therefore, while this research demonstrated the importance for a Western partner to acknowledge and account for its privileged power position to successfully partner with a non-Western group, other partnership tensions that emerged provide several new directions for future research. First, since the tensions compromised the integrity of the relationships, it is necessary for scholars and practitioners to build an understanding of how to minimize the less stable aspects of international postcolonial partnerships. Questions of exclusivity due to disparate cultural, sociohistorical, and sexual circumstances should be considered. Alex was unable to disclose his sexual identity and Paul, Melissa, and Scott did not perceive the same level of involvement as the other members of the organizations. Further, the USCBN attempted to

promote equality within the partnership, but Scott was deferential towards the USCBN. He did not feel as if he could communicate directly to the USCBN without a prompt from their end. As a “staff member,” Scott felt as if he needed to go through the Sisters to speak to the USCBN. While the USCBN attempted to prompt the agency of their Kenyan partners, Scott consciously gave his power back to the group. Similarly, Paul wanted more direct involvement from the USCBN. The USCBN worked to promote the KSN’s independent sustainability; yet, Paul described specific scenarios in which he wanted the USCBN to intervene in the KSN’s initiatives and programs.

Interestingly, then, this research shows that there must be a focus on the ways in which non-Western members willingly concede to their Western partners and the various circumstances that cause them to do so. While USCBN was trying to “work themselves out of a job” and decrease dependency, Paul, in many ways, sought to increase the dependency, reinforcing more traditional colonial relations. Though they had critical insights to offer, Melissa and Scott both hesitated to offer input, assigning more power to the USCBN than to their own organizations or themselves. So, again, while future research must continue to examine the ways in which Western groups must be reflexive and resist reproducing postcolonial power relations, it is equally important for non-Western groups to be aware and reflect on their own participation in the process.

Along with the practical limitations and future research directions, there are important methodical and theoretical factors to consider. The dichotomy of simultaneously being a researcher and a volunteer presents many avenues for future research. It is not uncommon for a field researcher to become emotionally invested in her or his work (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). As previously mentioned, I experienced many emotions while conducting my research. I am an

advocate for nutritional wellness. It was devastating for me to sit back and watch entire communities go without basic access to healthy food and water. Even though I was reflexive of the emotions I experienced, future researchers need to expand upon the emotionality of fieldwork from a postcolonial perspective. Past research has called for an “action research perspective” or “researchers [who work] to develop proactive strategies among global justice organizations to build the potential for radical or transgressive coalitions that aim toward transformational change” (Ganesh, Zoller, & Cheney, 2005, p.185). As practitioners, the USCBN engaged in practices that reflect the action research perspective. Future scholarship should build on the ways in which *practitioners* can collaboratively facilitate positive change in the lives of their research participants; similar to the work of the USCBN and the KCN and the KSN. Developing ways to reflexively integrate the use of an action research perspective will help to avoid the hopeless frustrations that are caused by working within postcolonial contexts.

Lastly, as I began this research journey, I sought to expand literature on postcolonial international capacity building partnerships. Yet, the scope of this study is limited to the research participants and not postcolonial societies at large. As indicated by Prasad (2003) and evidenced by my findings, “different countries and societies are *not* postcolonial *in the same way*” (p. 28). Given the differences in postcolonial societies, the specific outcomes and implications of this research are limited to the participants and the USCBN, the KCN, and the KSN. Future research should consider conducting similar research studies in various other intercultural postcolonial contexts. Moreover, future researchers should explore nonprofit capacity building through the lens of a non-Western partner to provide a louder voice to a population often silenced by Communication research (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007).

As I sit here typing the last paragraphs of my thesis, bittersweet feelings emerge and I feel nostalgic. Memories of a few years back flood my mind. The concept for this research developed approximately three years ago. When I first set out to conduct research on international nonprofits, I did so out of a place of frustration. My volunteer experience in South Africa left me confused; I questioned how resources could be so poorly managed. When I was in South Africa, I wondered if the US nonprofit knew the children were going without food as they were building elaborate cement homes. I wondered why the South African “house mothers” did not question the US organization and press them to channel resources towards the children’s most immediate needs. The orphanage and the house mothers had next to nothing, and it was evident they were happy to accept anything that was offered; even if it was not what they nor the children needed most. Unfortunately, the US nonprofit did not actively work to include the house mothers in the decision making processes and upon understanding postcolonial circumstances, I realized why the women silenced themselves in the face of their Caucasian partners. To this day, I can still feel the emotion of those frustrations when I revisit the memories.

As I try to brush away the frustrated feelings, my mind drifts to memories of exactly a year ago. Last May, a couple of months before I left for Kenya, I began compiling literature for Chapter Two. I can remember experiencing similar frustrations as I worked to compile the scarce research covering the dynamics of international nonprofit partnerships. I can remember being particularly frustrated after reading Michael and Cynthia Stohl’s article, “Human Rights, Nation States, and NGOs: Structural Holes and the Emergence of Global Regimes.” Through this article, Stohl and Stohl (2005) identified the need for nonprofit organizations in our globalized organizational climate. Considering the importance of nonprofits to the survival of global communities, I was perplexed as to why more Communication researchers were not

producing scholarship within this area of the field. As I became more familiar with the research available, I remember developing a shallow understanding of international nonprofit partnerships. Through that understanding, I was able to position collaboration as an important factor promoting the success of international nonprofit partnerships. I thought back to the summer of 2010. The US nonprofit partnering with the South African orphanages failed to collaborate with the house mothers. They operated from the Western tendency to direct and control. While it did not eliminate the frustration I experienced volunteering, I at least better understood the poor misuse of resources.

As I continued to reflect on this time last year, the beginning of the summer of 2012, memories of my first meeting with the USCBN resurfaced. Shortly after I was introduced to the USCBN, I traveled to Kenya with members from the organization. Arriving to Thigio, I regained hope for international nonprofit partnerships. I was blown away by the level of collaboration amongst the USCBN and the KCN. Sister Elizabeth actually told Tara that the USCBN could not do something they wanted to do! Further, the KSN also drove the agenda for our time in Athi River. Yes, the USCBN provided the material and technical resources that allowed the workshops to happen. But, the KCN and the KSN organized the workshops and provided a space for the USCBN to do their work. The trajectory of their partnerships led them to a place of collaboration. The partnerships initiated from relational alliances that promoted friendships and trust amongst the groups. While there were some tensions that prohibited complete effectiveness, the strong relational ties between the members superseded any of their organizational shortcomings. The USCBN aided the KCN and the KSN in strengthening and sustaining the mission of their organizations. Through USCBN's support, the KCN and the KSN were able to better serve their community. Even though my experience in Kenya was suffused with emotions, I

left the country feeling proud of the USCBN and hopeful for international nonprofit partnerships.

As I sit here today, on a beautiful sunny, late-spring morning, I feel humbled to have had the opportunity to contribute to the larger body of scholarship investigating international nonprofit work. It is my hope that this study will inspire other practitioners and researchers to peruse capacity building initiatives and develop collaborative partnerships that privilege local practices. This research provides a framework for future scholarship and it has given a global voice to a population frequently silenced in the international community. As I complete my thesis, I would like to end by inviting other scholars to engage in research examining international nonprofit capacity building partnerships. I believe that the capacity building approach to nonprofit organizing is an effective solution to many of our global challenges and expanding the research conversation will only allow for capacity building networks to continue and grow.

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APPENDIX

KCN/KSN Interview Questions:

1. What motivated you to begin working with the KCN/KSN?
2. What is the mission of your organization? What does your organization attempt to accomplish?
3. Describe your organizations relationship with the USCBN.
4. When do you bring something up to/ initiate contact with the USCBN?
5. What are the key successes/challenges of working with the USCBN?
6. Explain how you use the HWCP materials provided by the USCBN?

USCBN Interview Questions:

1. What motivated you to begin working with the USCBN?
2. What is the mission of your organization? What does your organization attempt to accomplish?
3. Describe the USCBN's relationship with the KCN/KSN.
4. When do you bring something up to/initiate contact with KCN/KSN.
5. What are the key successes/challenges of working with the KCN/KSN?
6. When developing the HWCP materials, how did you adapt the materials to reflect the cultural ways of doing things in Kenya?